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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: AN INTERPRETATION

BY

BERNARD L. POTVIN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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FOR THE DEGREE OF Ph.D.

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1987

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submitted by Bernard L. Potvin

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

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To my Annie

ABSTRACT

Through an ethnographic-type study of the Christian religious educational experience of two high school students, I attempted to uncover their assumptions regarding Christian religious education, and how their language, behaviour, and beliefs expressed these assumptions. The identification of these particular aspects of their Christian religious education experience promoted and encouraged my insight into just what the experience of Christian religious education was like for the two students.

A second purpose of the study was to personally acknowledge certain paradigmatic presuppositions in order to explicate an interpretation of the experiences of the students. I brought the themes of the students' experiences into a perspective with my presuppositions in order to facilitate a mutual interpretation and to see where their experiences and my presuppositions could be affirmed or disaffirmed. This process helped me gain deeper insight into our experiences of Growing, Community, Meaning, God, and Story, (the five themes I identified in the experiences of the students).

The study has revealed for me that realities truly exist; an inner reality or interiority that needs to be strong, fully functional, and developing in order to make meaning of an outer reality; the doctrines, systems, and foundations of Christianity. Both realities need to be truthful, in interpreting each other.

I have grown in my faith as a result of this study, and invite the reader of this study to grow as well.

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SECTION I: THE STUDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"What is the experience of Christian religious education like for its participants?" This question has largely been overlooked by both critics and proponents of Christian religious education. Instead, Christian education has been involved in debates concerning whether Christian schools promote intolerance and prejudice toward others who are not Christian, whether they function in a naiveté about historicity and the dialecticism of our concrete world, and whether they are financially, intellectually, and philosophically viable. For those who participate in Christian religious education, the reason for the activity is to provide a uniquely "Christian" religious education. This particular reason has received minimal attention by researchers and by critics interested in the activity. This study sought to uncover what Christian religious education is for its direct participants, and did so by examining the experiences of two high school students.

The context of the study was the life-world of the participants as lived in their schools, their homes, their communities, and their churches. For the researcher, to begin to see involved an entering into the life-world of the participants, and trying to understand the context in which their life-world is embedded. An intimate understanding of the context was necessary for an in-depth understanding of what Christian religious education was for the participants. From this study, since the participants were observed in many settings normal for

them, a fund of impressions was gained which sensitized the researcher to the influences in the participants' experience, and served as a base for analysis and interpretation. For the purposes of this study, then, the concept of "Christian religious education" was not limited to the paradigm of schooling.

Purpose of the Study

This study had two purposes. The first was to describe what Christian religious education is for its participants by uncovering the assumptions that students brought to it, and the ways in which language, behavior, and beliefs expressed these assumptions. The nature of the question asked, "What is the experience of Christian religious education like for its participants?", suggested that an ethnographic type of research methodology should be used. The themes which constituted the participants' experience are described in Section II of this report.

A second purpose of the study was to bring the findings from this ethnographic research into a hermeneutical relationship, a perspective, with a model of Christian religious education. The model used was organized around a number of sensitizing concepts that I recognize as contributing to what, for me, is Christian religious education. They are: God, faith, hope, love, relationship, church, authority, conversion, conscientization and Christian story. These concepts or themes constitute my present attitudes and convictions about the social historical world of Christian education and highlight what I believe to be the most important aspects of Christian religious education. This model formed the basis of my convictions about Christian religious

education and, as such, "provided a basic framework highlighting the importance of certain kinds of events, activities and behaviors" (Patton, 1980, p. 138). This model provided a structure that made this topic manageable and a focus for analyzing my observations. Thus I began to understand the experience of the participants. It is important for the reader to note that without a clear model against which the hermeneutic could occur, there would only have been uncritical reporting of the outward appearance.

In using the model as an organizing framework and as a source of methodology for research, I acknowledge having had paradigmatic and substantive predispositions. By uncovering my socialization process and how it had shaped my world view, theoretical blinders began to disappear and I truly began to engage in letting relationships emerge from the data, inductively and honestly. The qualitative analysis was grounded in the phenomenon being studied. The findings emerged from the data and were not insiduously and covertly imposed on it by the researcher's organizing framework of predispositions. "Surprises" did indeed emerge.

Finally, as Willis (1980) recommends, the participants were no longer objects to be studied, but were co-subjects. The reporting concerned the relationships between their subjective/cultural systems from which, in moments of reflexivity, the question was asked "What are these things happening?"

The second purpose of the study, then, was to bring the themes of the research findings, the meanings and the emergent understandings of Christian religious education for the participants, into a perspective

with the researcher's theory and predispositions. These interpretations are outlined in Section III of this report entitled Interpretations; External Hermeneutic.

I believe that arising from both parts of the study, for Christian religious educators, are ideas for promoting redemptive pedagogy. In this study's report, Christian school teachers, directors of curriculum, and pastors may encounter challenging and radical approaches towards their approach in integrating biblical faith with their students' personal experiences.

Definition of Terms (As Used in This Study)

Christian religious education: Christian religious education "is a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the story of the Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's Kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us" (Groome(a), 1981, p. 25).

Conscientization: Conscientization, in the Freirian sense, is becoming critically aware of that which liberates and which oppresses and moving towards praxis to change the historical reality of one's condition (Freire, 1970).

Christian Story: The Christian story is the sum of what has been presented and occasionally not preserved of the Christian faith. It is the total of what scripture, tradition, and theology tell us about Christianity.

Conversion: Conversion is an awakened critical Christian consciousness at a religious, intellectual, and moral level. Intel-

lectual conversion is a shift in how one knows. It means knowing what is good, true, and intelligent. Religious conversion is being grasped by a truly ultimate religious concern, a surrender and turning to God. It is a gift from God and usually comes first before an intellectual or a moral conversion (Groome(b), 1981, pp. 484-490).

Dialectical: In the Hegelian tradition, dialectic implies a moment of affirmation, assent or acceptance followed by a moment of refusal and denial (not rejection) and concluding with a moment of moving beyond which subsumes and incorporates both into a higher synthesis (Groome(a), 1981, p. 196).

Hermeneutic: Hermeneutic is from the Greek word "hermeneuein" to "make clear" or interpret. It involves a search for meaning in a text, tradition, and in the case of this study, a Christian's experience. It adds different perspectival insight to the activity of explanation (Grant and Tracy, 1984, pp. 4, 134).

Dialectical Hermeneutic: Dialectical hermeneutic is the activity of discerning the truth and affirming what is in a text or tradition. This activity is followed by discerning the limitations in our understanding of it that are to be refused. The final activity is an attempt to move beyond both previous activities by carrying the truth that was there and adding new understandings. This affirms an individual's historical concreteness and transformation potential within self and culture (Groome(a), 1981, pp. 213-25).

Faith: Faith is the intentional and purposeful Christian response to the Christian Story involving the cognitive element of belief, the

affective element of trust, and the reflective/active element of praxis.

Hope: Hope is engaging and celebrating in the vision of one's own personal story and of the Christian Story.

Interiority: In the Lonergan sense, interiority is the mental/spiritual being. It is thus characterized by an invariant structure that develops in five levels: 1) encountering the realities of lived life; 2) being aware of their nature; 3) understanding the reasons, assumptions, and motives for one's praxis within the realities; 4) judging what one has encountered and understood, looking both to one's personal story and to the Christian story; and 5) responding with reflective action and doing so in love (Lonergan, 1979).

Love: Love is the action of affirming, accepting, embracing, and assenting to God and to others in relation to the Gospel's story.

Praxis: Praxis is a way of knowing that arises from and is in itself experimental/relational and active/reflective. It implies a purposeful, intentional, and reflectively chosen ethical action.

Relationships: Relationships imply the network of people intertwined with one's life. At the cultural level, embedded in relationships, are socio-cultural knowledge, assumptions, symbolic meanings, and concrete historicity. Relationships are transforming and themselves can be transformed (i.e. are dialectical).

Delimitations:

The study was delimited to two students from two private Christian-orientated high schools. This delimitation allowed for the necessary commitment of time and self in order to get close enough to

the factual worlds of the participants in order to discover and come to know their terms and their meanings. The delimitation also enabled a faithful analysis and understanding of the students' life-worlds in Christian religious education.

Outline of the Report

Section I outlines the background to the study. It begins with Chapter One, the Introduction. Chapter Two presents explanatory information for the choice of terms used in the title of the study. Chapter Three outlines the methodology of the research. Chapter Four presents the background to the study in the way of my personal story.

Section II presents the descriptions and conclusions regarding the experience of Christian religious education for the two students. Chapters Five through Nine outline the research findings from the two students and their school, home, and church. Chapter Five presents the theme of Story, Chapter Six presents the theme of Community, Chapter Seven the theme of Growing, Chapter Eight the theme of Meaning, and Chapter Nine the theme of God. Chapter Ten presents the conclusions of the ethnographic research with the participants. Chapter Eleven presents the summary and reflections of the ethnographic part of the research.

Section III presents the interpretations. Chapter Twelve presents the interpretations arrived at from bringing together the findings from the participants' experiences and the model for Christian religious education. Finally, Chapter Thirteen presents personal reflections covering the research period.

CHAPTER II

THE RESEARCH TITLE EXPLAINED

Experience

In this research, I attempted to describe as deeply and insightfully as possible what two participants, two high school students named Danny and Rita, experienced in an encounter with Christian religious education. Their experience is the text that I attempted to describe, analyze, and understand. My experience naturally became part of this text as I used ethnographic-type methodologies to conduct this research. I became the research instrument.

The term experience is a key part of this description and it needs to be described and understood as it was used in the context of this study. Experience, according to Oxford, means "practical acquaintance with facts or events; knowledge resulting from this." Experience connotes something "personally encountered" and "lived through", whereby something such as knowledge, for example, is gained. In the case of this research, what is involved is the experience of two young people with Christian religious education as it has been and is "encountered personally and lived through".

Experience is something that has happened and is happening in living historical beings. Experience is not fixed or absolute. It has a characteristic of temporality in how it is related to expectations developed in the past, held in the present, and extended into the future (Polkinghorne, 1983).

Experience is important for humans because when it breaks down expectations and presuppositions, it has a teaching potential. There-

fore, when we say we can learn from experience we are right. Experience participates invisibly in every event of understanding. Articulating one's experience, that is, naming what the events are in one's experience, can be the beginning of understanding. Actually, the naming of one's perception of events is the articulation of experience. Experience is how one perceives how things were and are; that is the beginning of understanding.

Alfred Shutz suggests that what is first given to consciousness is a stream of experiences both passive and active (in Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 207). After the experience, the ego lifts parts of the experience out and reflects on and identifies the parts. This is when meaning comes. An individual helps in experience identification and subsequent meaning-making as the individual questions experiences openly and dialectically, so that the understanding and value of the experience remains dynamic.

It was this openness that I sought to have in my look into the experience of two high school students. I needed this dialectical openness to their articulation of their experience so that my understanding of their experience would not be translated into shallow themes. Since I needed to be prepared for a reading of their experience as a text, I needed to interrogate my own experience. My presuppositions and thinking in this "look" continually needed to be readjusted because of the qualitative nature of the study.

Experience means immediacy, first-handedness, and explication through reflection (O'Collins, 1981). Explication through reflection means, for example, that experiences of childhood, recollected in

tranquility or non-tranquility, years later may betray their meaning for the first time (Robinson, 1983). These experiences though first had to be known; there is a cognitive dimension to experience.

O'Collins (1981) maintains that all experience has meaning and that the experience of the individual, no less than the whole of life itself, can be trusted to carry meaning. Experience carries people in some direction and can be interpreted in the context of the direction of the community that an individual lives in. The experiences of the participants in this study were understood in the context of their communities.

Husserl (in Polkinghorne, 1983) maintained that experience is a constituted meaningful and ordered understanding. Experience is built up through an activity of constitution of existential structures. Therefore, in one respect, an experience has invariant structures which may be described. One's articulated concrete experience can be analyzed to see what structures have been constitutive of it, always bearing in mind that the articulation is really a perception, and one that may either be larger or smaller than "real life" itself. An analysis of the articulated experience means looking to the structures of the experience, or the

> ... organizing principles making sense of experience in the first place ... (Husserl, in Polkinghorne, p. 204)

In my endeavour to see, analyze, and understand the experience of the subjects of this study, I have pulled out certain themes. Hopefully they represent the essence of their experience. The parameters of the study were always dialectically open. I did not limit my look by using only predetermined questions or seeking to validate my

theoretical predispositions. The best way, I felt, to understand the Christian religious education experience was through ethnographic methods, as I would be able to share the experience and have an inside view of the participant's life-world.

Christian Religious Education

I began this study with Thomas Groome's definition of Christian religious education:

> A political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the story of the Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us (1981(a), p. 25)

Groome(a) uses the term religious in the definition to refer to the general "... investigation of the religious dimension of life and the common human quest for a transcendent ground of being" (p. 24).

Groome(a) then carefully describes the adjective "Christian" as referring to Christians' unique call to a specific vision and tradition. The term Christian religious education reminds educators that it is humility, sharing, transcendence, and affirming that should characterize the endeavour.

Groome(a) stresses that there is a political nature to the activity of Christian religious education, since there is reclamation from the past and proposal for the future of certain Christian truths and activities. The catechetical activity implicit in Groome's(a) definition suggests that retelling of the story of the Christian faith is implicit to Christian religious education.

The attractiveness of Groome's(a) definition resides in the notions of "... pilgrims in time ..." and "... (attention) to the activity of God in our present ...." Pilgrim refers to a journey full of encounters, decisions, and actions. These notions are, I believe, forums through which God and people can indeed work to "educate" or "lead out." Attending to God's activity in our present refers to listening to, submitting to, and acknowledging God's sovereignty in the affairs of people.

During the time that I deliberated over the research findings and over my own "coming to terms," I came to a naming of the activity of Christian religious education that reaches beyond Groome's(a) definition while maintaining its essential features. I have given more attention to revelation, or God working directly into the lives of students. By uncovering the nature and purpose of God's work in individuals' lives, I acknowledge that God indeed calls people, directs people, and personally loves individual people. I have given more attention to conversion than does Groome(a). The ostensible foolishness of the Gospel of Christ requires shifts and changes in one's religious, moral, and intellectual outlook and practise. I have given more attention to Jesus Christ and to the vision I have of Him being a redeemer eager to reveal and to give insight to students. Finally, I have stressed that mutuality and affirmation replace orientations towards control and "power over" in the practise of pedagogy that is characteristic of my own past experience.

The definition I am left with is one still open to maturing. I acknowledge the limitations of language to adequately identify what may

turn out to be a more complex activity than Christian educators have ever considered before. Therefore, Christian religious education is attending to and cooperating with God's activity within and surrounding the student. Christian religious education is a particular way of being with students that deliberately and in mutuality reveals God's activity historically, in the present, and for the future with the final goal as right relationship formation with God and with others. Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of God's activity in the world.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter contains details about the setting of the study and the procedures that were used to conduct the study. It outlines the fundamental notions most often associated with qualitative research with the purpose of clarifying the research logic and structure as it pertains to the study's focus, which is describing, analyzing, and interpreting the experience of Christian religious education of two high school students, Danny and Rita. This chapter will outline the ethnographic type of procedures used: participant observation, interviewing, case histories, and document analysis.

Setting of the Study

The research for this study focused upon two high school students. The students' parents, "main" teachers, and the principals were included. In addition, the life-world of each participant, that which extends into, influences, and is in turn influenced by their context, was studied. Relationships, organizational perspectives, and recreational use of time were but a few community-engendered notions that bore on the answering of the research question and were therefore consciously attended to throughout. Also attended to were the unique emotional and socio-cultural conditions of seventeen year olds and the possible influence of each participant's gender.

The choice of participants was problematic because of the variety of possible religious orientations and the accessibility and willing-

ness of participants to invest time in this study. There exist many forms of Christian schools. There are, for example, Roman Catholic, Seventh-Day Adventist, and fundamentalist evangelical schools. The delimiting of the choice of participants and setting, I decided, depended, ultimately, not on religious orientation so much as on the accessibility, willingness, and reflective abilities of the participants. After visiting many schools and principals, talking with teachers and parents, and interviewing students, two schools and two students were chosen. Both responded to my initial search for participants favorably and I began in one school, Alliance Covenant Community, in September, 1985, and in the other school, Kerygma, in early October, 1985. These school names are fictitious.

An initial meeting with teachers took place in both schools in September to outline the nature of my research with the intent of informing possible participants. During these initial meetings the principals suggested parents and students they felt could engage meaningfully in such a study. These participants were brought together for an informal dialogical session regarding the nature, commitment, and possibilities of such a study. A final pair of student participants, Danny and Rita, were chosen and study commenced in late September and early October in each school. Danny and Rita are fictitious names.

Participation, observations, and interviews were held in empty classrooms, offices, hallways, gymnasiums, homes, and, in Danny's case, outside on his trapline. Interviews were taped and transcribed the next day. I averaged one to two visits a week to each school, often

staying for a half day each visit, and rarely staying for less than two hours. Their journals were read and analyzed periodically, and my interpretations brought back to them for confirmation.

Danny turned out to be an unobtrusive young man. He walked smoothly and quietly, carried himself somewhat hesitantly, and often appeared to be reticent and defensive. He enjoyed the outdoors; trapping, shooting, and hiking, and it is here he experienced his greatest fulfillment.

Rena turned out to be quietly energetic, and had a sparkle in her eye almost perpetually. She was light and unbounded in her movements. Rena enjoyed discussions, debates on issues, and youth group activities. It was in groups that were discussing or working towards some common goal that she was most fulfilled.

It was, and still is, my conviction that a reflective student, along with faith-committed "adult" participants; teachers, parents, and principals, are in the best position to make personal and community faith-based decisions. I was fortunate to find participants that could engage reflectively with me in the kinds of sharing needed in this study. Eventually, I was able to represent in written form the experience of their Christian religious education.

Methods of Study

One purpose of the study was to describe and analyze what the Christian religious education experience was for its participants. The second purpose was to interpret their experience by bringing the meanings and the emergent understandings of their Christian religious education into a hermeneutical relationship with a model of Christian

religious education. Ethnographic research methodology provided the descriptive data of the experience of the participants. The data was analyzed and reported as themes. The data and the model of Christian religious education were then used for mutual interpretation.

Qualitative Research Methodology

As Spradley and McCurdy (1972) suggest, ethnographies are descriptions or reconstructions of intact cultural scenes and groups. The design of this study indicated that particular ethnographic type of research strategies be used that were "... investigative strategies conducive to cultural reconstruction" (Geotz and LeCompte, 1984, p.38). In this way, not only did distinct strategies such as interviewing and participant observation show congruency and yield comparable data, but they did" ... uncover variance and illuminate" (Dick in Miles, 1979, p. 138). As Dick suggests, various methods of "triangulation" or examination of the same phenomena from multiple perspectives "... enriches our understanding by allowing new and deeper dimensions to emerge" (Dick in Miles, 1979, p. 138). The multiple perspectives I used were ethnographic strategies such as interviewing, participant observation, journal keeping, and document analysis; hermeneutics where the research findings from the participants' and the researchers' predispositions were brought together to interpret each other; and phenomenology where the essences of various aspects of the participants' experience were described.

As deviant dimensions of the experience of Christian religious education emerged, and different viewpoints produced elements which did not fit the researcher's previous theories of their experience,

old theories about aspects of their experience were refashioned and new theories constructed. This lead to a synthesis or integration of theories that were emerging in the context of the study, with a critical reflexive assessment of what was emerging (Willis, 1980, p.90-93). The return to the field with the new generative themes from my new theories for springboards helped generate new questions, and in turn, new understandings. What arose was what is known as holistic, phenomenological, or thick description. The research procedure that was used began with data collection, moved through to hypotheses forming, and returned for additional data collection to confirm or expand hypotheses.

Data collection included participant observation in the participant life-world, various types of interview strategies (from the structured to the projective and suppositional), the writing of career histories, and the keeping of journals. This data collection then led to the "reconstructive" process of the participants' experience and the writing of the report about the five themes of their experience (story, community, growth, meaning, and God).

I followed Seiber's "working framework" for this research process. Data collection was intertwined with analysis so classes of phenomena were formulated (1978, pp.1335-1355). This intertwining was essentially a process of "categorizating concepts," and categories such as the expectations of adults and prayer were identified. These categories were identified, as were the linkages between categories, noting regularities, and specifying if-then hypotheses. Provisional testing of hypotheses, looking for concomitant variation, was employed to rule

out what Seiber calls "spurious or confounding factors" (1978, p. 1335). These categories were often brought back to the research setting for verification by additional observation and interviewing. A final choice of themes which I believed represented the essence of the participants' experience was made in April of the school year.

As I worked in the field in this fashion, I was able to consider more accurately the validity of generalizations and look to other participant data, journal entries, for example, for supporting evidence. The final decision regarding explicitly detailed interview questions came after an initial time spent with the participants and a sensitive uncovering of what might be the best methods for understanding what Christian religious education was for them.

This qualitative research was an attempt to look at, uncover, and understand the meanings and interpretations associated with each participant's experience of Christian religious education. The research was an attempt to describe the experience of Christian religious education as the participants saw it. This description was made possible through my participation with the two students in their own natural settings.

One setting was the Christian school itself, the situation we normally associate paradigmatically with education. An understanding of the participants' points of view in this particular setting was an insightful generator of the inside cultural knowledge of the participants concerning their Christian religious education. Much of the knowledge was in varying states of conscious articulation, and it was an interviewing objective to promote the unfolding of this cultural

knowledge in its fullest form. The home, the after-school activities, and the weekend activities were some of the contexts that added multiple interrelationships from which data emerged to either confirm or disaffirm the data emerging from the school setting.

The language used by the participants in these settings as they lived and told their "stories" provided clues as to what their associated meanings, feelings, and praxis were. As the researcher, I then moved back to a participant observer role and gathered new data within the meanings and experiences articulated. New themes emerged which in turn became the focus of additional interview questions (Patton, 1980, pp. 199-268). Data collection was shaped and influenced by emergent hypotheses and themes," ...an ongoing process of simultaneous tasks of observing coding and analysis" (Shaffir, Stebbins and Tiorowetz, 1980, p. 6). As Patton suggests:

> What is discovered must be verified by going back to the empirical world under study and examining the extent to which the emergent analysis fits the phenomenon and works to explain what has been observed. (p.47)

As Guba states:

> The distinction most often made in describing this process is with logical positivism, the seeking of facts or causes of social phenomenon, the external forces that might be able to be quantified or described. Given the complexity, depth and networks of interrelationships, what is required is a non-linear research methodology, one that indeed is qualititative, "riding the waves" between observation and verification. (Guba, 1978, p. 46)

Regarding the fit that Patton talks about, my analysis was applicable and indicated by the data under study. Hypotheses were developed not only from the data but in relation to the data during the course of

the research. Only in this way could I hope to understand what Christian religious education was for these participants.

Qualitative Analysis and Interpretation

Content analysis began with the coding or classification of emergent data. This "physical" sorting facilitated the emergence of themes or patterns. Part of this stage of the research included classifying pure description of streams of behavior, analysis of case histories, and analysis of interview transcripts to sort data into categories. Next came my analysis and interpretation. Van Manen (1979) describes this analysis as making clear the distinctions between first-order concepts and second-order concepts. Van Manen suggests that first-order concepts are the operational data and are the running streams of behaviour, talk, and so on. They include the presentational data, the appearances the participants strive to portray. Both types of concepts, first-order and second-order, were subjected to the analytic work of sorting the data into categories, naming the categories, and verifying these with the participants. Second-order concepts were those more relevant to my culture because I, as the researcher, engaged in decoding them from my perspective. They represented the "interpretations of interpretations." For example, when one participant said, "I like religion class because I get a chance to express my ideas," implicit in this statement I believed to be concepts bearing on opportunities for talk and class recognition. This step included the beginnings of recognizing and naming themes.

However, in looking for themes, patterns, and natural variations, what was used where possible were the indigenous typologies and the

classification systems according to the "inside" or emic view of the participants. For one example, this was their way of classifying types of teachers. When it was needed, however, typologies based on second-order concepts were carefully presented to the participants for verification.

In summary, category systems were devised by looking at the data and assigning the data titles which summarized it. This categorization and titling enabled me to analyze, to look for convergence, fit, and recurring regularities, and to look for divergence which was a sign that interviewing was required to flush out more categories. The process was done by physically sorting the data and assigning a name for the category.

From here, analysis of data occurred for meaning regarding significance, casual links, and speculative hypothetical conjectures. Possible themes were identified. I moved from my work of interpreting continuously back to the field for additional confirmatory interviewing and participating-observing. As Patton states:

> We move back and forth between the phenomenon of the program and our abstraction of that program, between the descriptions of what has occurred and our analysis of that description, between the complexity of reality and our simplification of that reality. (1980, p.324)

Validation and verification occurred simultaneously. I searched for emergent variations, negative cases, and conflicting explanations. Interviewing was a prime way to achieve this validation and verification.

Two main types of interviewing strategies were employed - the guided interviews initially, and the informal conversational interviews

throughout. The guided interview began with a set of generative questions for each participant presented ~~at the~~ first interview. This interview type provided topics to be explored and areas within which exploration and conversation-building could occur. Individual perspectives and the participants' own understandings in their own terms emerged. Informal interviews permitted perusal of information in whatever direction appeared to be appropriate. These informal chats flowed from what was happening in their lives at the time and provided some emergent categories.

In Chapter One I explicated the "naturalistic" role I saw my model playing in eventual analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. I suggested, however, that in no way is there a design of imposition onto the ethnographic data; but rather, in the liberating sense that Paul Willis suggests "it is a recognition of the ultimate reflexive relationship of researchers to their subjects." (p. 91) The theoretical predisposition became important in the external hermeneutic methodology.

External Hermeneutic Research Methodology

A part of the methodology of the study that helped give clarity to the study's focus was to bring the data from the study of the participants' life-world into a hermeneutical relationship with the model articulated for Christian religious education by the researcher. The methodology chosen was one of superimposing the data gathered in an external hermeneutical relationship with the meanings generated by the theoretical model. There were two questions guiding this interpretation. First, "What does the data of the participant's life-world

mean in the light of the data of the model?" "What has been affirmed, not affirmed, made clear in the participant's data?" Second, "What does the data of the theoretical model mean in the light of the data from the participant's life-world?" "What has been affirmed, not affirmed, made clear?" The descriptions of this relationship have been written in Section III of this report.

Validity

The research approaches used in this study were qualitative. Research methodologies used were ethnographic in nature; participant-observation, interviewing, document analysis, and journal keeping. Validity depended on this choice of research paradigm. Validity in qualitative research has been conceptualized as

> ... the adequacy of a description as a representation of a social situation. (Dawson, 1979, p. 1)

Dawson suggests that the adequacy of a description can be judged in relation to its purposes. Therefore, the representation of the social situation must include the purpose for the description. The purpose of this study was to describe and interpret what the experience of Christian religious education was for two of its participants. The validation procedures used then concerned the establishment of the trustworthiness, truthfulness, and faithfulness of the description and interpretation of this situation.

The following validation procedures were used. Entry into the lives of the participants with trust and mutuality was deliberately attended to. Field notes and interview transcriptions were coded and analyzed after every visit to the school for categories of responses,

contexts, and types of interactions. As well, inductive analysis was done in which the responses were questioned to determine inferences, second-order concepts, and hypotheses regarding possible themes. This emerging interpretation determined the direction of the next series of interviews and the contexts in which to participate and observe, until a point was reached where, in further observing and interviewing, either the participants or I were repeating ourselves. A saturation point was reached.

A second validation procedure used was a continual asking of participants for their confirmation or disconfirmation of my analysis and interpretations. A third validation procedure used was triangulation or multiple methods of data collection such as interviewing, document analysis, participant observation, and journal keeping. The combination of these methods and the use of multiperson and multisituations (Smith and Pohland, 1974) reduced threats to validity. Multipersons included the parents, the teachers, and the principals of each participant. They were interviewed throughout the year. Multisituations included home, school, and community observations.

Also, I was conscious throughout the year of possible sources of invalidity such as participant ulterior motives, their desire to please, bars to spontaneity, and idiosyncratic factors such as mood, the questioning strategy used, and recent negative experience (Dean and White in Dawson, p. 6, 1974). I attempted to show that anonymity would be kept so any ulterior motives could be kept to a minimum. The amount of time spent in their situations enhanced trust and spontaneity. I observed change and had time to verify my findings with the partici-

pants. The relationships that I developed with the participants and their families were, I believe, lasting ones. A variety of types of interview strategies were used, from informal chats to guided, structured interviews in an attempt to minimize idiosyncratic factors.

A final source of validity now concerns any reader of this study. The reader should be able to understand similar settings and experiences, not because these would be identical with the reader's experiences and settings, but because the reader might have a personal basis for comparing and contrasting and have his/her own theory. I discussed my findings regularly with my committee members to see if this type of naturalistic generalizability could be employed as a validity check. Could they read my notes and compare and contrast with what they knew? One committee member read my field notes in an attempt to confirm, from her perspective, my description analysis and emergent understandings. Also, ethnographic reports in finished form were submitted to my committee for similar scrutiny.

The generalizability achieved then concerns "the recognition of salient characteristics of a particular entity (Donmayer, p. 18, 1979). Readers can generalize from parts of the study to their own situation because of the "assumption of intersubjectivity" (McCutcheon 1981, p. 9).

Reliability.

The reliability of the study depends largely on the reader's assessment of me as research instrument. For this reason, and for other reasons listed earlier, I have made clear my personal story and theoretical predisposition. I have attempted to articulate clearly my

procedures and have interpreted the participant experience openly so as to be judged. I have shared my understandings of the participants' experience with the participants and with my committee members in places where interpretation was called for. The reader, in assessing reliability, may apply McCutcheon's (1981) four criteria for interpretations:

> 1) Whether the line of reason is sound. 2) Whether sufficient evidence is presented in support of the interpretation. 3) Whether the interpretation is in accord with what is known about schooling. 4) Whether the interpretation promotes significant understanding.

The interpretation and the experience of being in the research setting are unique, situated, and dialectically related. Therefore any repeatability could never be total nor complete. However, readers may see the similarities and contrasts in their own situation and therefore view this study's report as significant and reliable.

Summary

The first research purpose, uncovering what is the experience of Christian religious education for its participants, meant ethnographic methodologies had to be employed. The description, analysis, and understanding of this was my aim, and the systematic "riding the waves" (Guba, p. 7) of description to verification and back to description was required. A written organizing scheme helped facilitate this purpose and method (see Appendix E).

I then placed the data from this research into a hermeneutical relationship with a model that has reference to Christian religious education aims, purpose, method, and evaluation. The theoretical

framework is my articulation, conceptualization, and extension on the work of Thomas Groome (1981a) and Bernard Lonergan (1979).

From both methodologically related movements, I hoped to come to understand more fully the meanings of a particular enterprise, Christian religious education, for a certain set of participants. I also wanted to come to a richer and deeper personal understanding, a growth in my own generating of meaning, and in my understandings, imaginations, feelings, and praxis in Christian religious education.

CHAPTER IV

FOREGROUND: THE RESEARCHER'S STORY

Rationale

Bill Pinar (1975) says that research is worth doing for its own contribution to one's self-realization. Therefore the journey the researcher has taken, and the experiences and the interpretations of these experiences, are the researcher's background from which both self-realization and interpretion of the participants' experience comes. The researcher's background needs to be brought to the foreground so the reader can better understand both the vitality and history of the study's question and the researcher's interpretation of the experiences being investigated.

Coming To the Question

No object, person, or experience is viewed atheoretically. Even our common sense view of things is theoretically based although we may never be able to unwrap much of our theory from our taken-for-granted discourse, attitudes, patterns of interactions, and symbols. The very questions we ask presuppose a theory as do our interests and orientations. In the case of this research the theory I held about Christian religious education needed to be illuminated as did my actual experiences and interpretations of these experiences. This illumination was necessary for two reasons. First, any bias and orientations regarding interpretations had to be recognized for what they are, were, and where they originated. If necessary, they could be moved away from what was most necessary in this research, the

participants' stories "speaking for themselves." Second, the researcher's theory and experiences needed to be made clear so these could dialectically and hermeneutically become one way into understanding the participants' experience. Then, not only could the theory change, the value placed on past experience and interpretations could change. Indeed, this research became praxis. It was lived, breathed, and became a part of me. For over and above the benefit the insight from this research may have for those in Christian religious education, this research has probably had a more profound influence on my life. I not only came to know two other human beings more intimately, I have changed my theory of Christian religious education. I have experienced, in a sense, a conversion. I am now compelled to live with respect for the sacredness of the "other" and for what I believe to be the rightful desire of God to be a loving guide for my life.

In the past, I have seen the horror of ostensibly well-intentioned people manipulating and controlling people's lives in Christian communities and churches in the name of Christianity. I had to leave the church I belonged to for ten years because I changed and God was revealing for me a different, more ecclesia-oriented way of being with people. It was, it often seemed to me, to be similar to what St. John of the Cross named the "dark night of the soul." Most of the surety about my Christianity and my own integrity and Christian love were shaken. It was a time of prayer and reading, of reflection on the vastness of my own interiority, and the battleground of meaning-making and story-developing that my interiority truly is. Here, in the natural process of the unfolding of my interiority as Bernard Lonergan

(1979) says, I was converted to wanting to accept God's will for my life, rather than someone else's will for my life. The "dark night" precipitated by this research had become a part of this conversion.

The background of my life, the experiences and interpretations of these experiences from which my theory arises, had now become the foreground of the study. The first "Christian" experiences I can recollect were situated in being brought up as a Roman Catholic. My life was full of ceremony, Latin mass, altar boys, choir boys, and Catholic schools administered by stern Catholic Sisters. These experiences made available to me a conscience, an ethical and moral orientation to life. These experiences also made me aware of the church's awareness, that there existed a God who was large, dark, and very powerful; but surprisingly, who loved us. I was supposed to know this they said because of Jesus Christ. He was, they said, a male, and a real person. Yet He really was not a real person. He was God who came to redeem me.

In later years I became more aware of this Catholic community; the church, school, and home working together, and the powerful socializational influence residing in tightly knit communities with a common orientation. I could quite honestly say that for me, at that time, Catholics were right and "Protestants" were wrong. Also, Jesus did redeem me, God was very large, and I was a sinner. What this meant remained a mystery to me. I had been inducted into an existing reality. It was not really mine to know, much less own, what the essence or the meanings of my faith were. It was enough to "show up" and to behave properly. There was, however, a question I had then that I remember clearly today. "What is behind all this? What is the

reason for these externalities? If this was true why didn't or couldn't I see it or know it?"

Slowly, without answers, I pulled away from the church and from the particular way of being in the world that I had been taught. It was a way characterized, I remember, as responding and behaving without meaning or vision. The community knew the truth and that was sufficient. As I entered my late teens I began to want to have a personally meaningful Christianity. I wanted faith to animate my trusting and doing, as well as believing, in Jesus and God. I wanted to know in what way the Bible was true. I wanted a Christian consciousness, to be critical of the injustice of the world from some sort of Christian perspective. I remember being typecast as a concerned, compassionate, and nice young boy. I was comfortable with "religion" then and nothing else in my world was offering the same type of hope and vision. The question now became not what was behind all this "external Christianity," but what does it all mean for me? Can I personally have a bit of Christianity?

I experienced at twenty-one the classical conversion experience associated with travelling evangelists and hell-and-brimstone preaching. I attended a crusade in Edmonton and the evangelist spoke about the evils of smoking, drinking, and drugs. He said there were two kingdoms. One was the devil's where all these evils were birthed. The other was God's, where truth, beauty, and righteousness resided. I do not know if it was the crusade, or the emotion of the moment that caused me to go up and accept Christ as my Lord and Saviour. I do think it was partially because I was being captured again at this time

by the primordial questions of my earlier years. In this captivity, and through the evangelist's call to be in God's kingdom, I now believed I could answer the questions. The question that arose again was what is behind all these externalities of life, of Christianity? I was also captured by the possibility that the story of Christianity could give some insight into life's meanings which, in turn, could explain my life and its meanings.

I turned in a new direction of service, reading Christian books and talking with Christians, and began focusing my energies on finding an orientation, a direction which would lead to some concrete answers. I was no more free at any time in my life than during my early twenties. In what was a thrust for transcendence, as Bernard Lonergan (1979) names it, I truly began to be intentionally engaged in the natural process of the unfolding of my interiority towards meaning and Christian action. I began to be attentive, to be understanding, to judge, and to act on the experiences of my life. I began to develop what Paulo Freire (1971) names a "critical consciousness." In this consciousness I reviewed my past church experience and looked forward to my future hopes, decoding both to distinguish between what my realities were and what were the realities others had set up for me. So now I became aware of hunger, poverty, and oppression and could see myself, as a North American, being a participant with the oppressors. I re-read the gospels, particularly John's, and re-read Augustine's Confessions, John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and C.S. Lewis' Narnia Chronicles. Each contributed to part of my growing consciousness of what it means to be a Christian and how I, though not

knowing fully the truth behind all the externalities, could at least try to "see through the glass darkly" and make sense in my own life of this Christianity.

I began to sense I had to do something to gain greater personal insight and to change the poverty and injustice of the world. I therefore worked with C.U.S.O., a Canadian aid organization in 1974, and spent 1974 and most of 1975 in Zambia, Africa. I soon discovered I had little to give my students and the local Zambians, some of whom indeed were starving and oppressed. I was not, I discovered, whole enough inside to give. Yet I had prayer groups among my students and worked with villagers ploughing fields and driving away elephants from maize crops. I saw one night a little girl about six years old come to her father with grubs she had found for supper and the father, ashamed that a white school teacher saw this, sent her away. Her distended belly and thinning hair predicted her death three weeks later.

I knew intuitively that my Christianity had something to do with acting, doing something in the world. Yet it had something to do with my interiority, coming to personal insight about life. I felt for the first time that I needed direction in learning how to have both doing and insight.

I left Zambia after contracting filiarisis and spent the next six months recovering in London, England. I chanced upon a Christian community in East London's Canning Town called the Mayflower Family Center. Here, not only would I find direction into my search for what Christianity means, but I would begin to learn about the synthesis that comes through praxis of doing and understanding. For here was a

community that served the community before and after prayer and reflection. Here I learned to act my way to a new way of thinking. I began to gain insight into my motives, memory, imagination, and attitudes from reflecting, with a community, on our actions in that community. In my day ministry as a maintenance person and my night ministry in the youth club with East London's toughest kids, I was being in the world in a particular way. I was prayerful, afraid, humble, courageous, and reflecting. My knowing was free from what Habermas (1968) calls constitutive interests. I was, I felt, growing in my faith, becoming more grounded in prayer and courage, and doing what God wanted me to do.

Here, I felt I began to make synthesis of the inner and outer realities. My questions had been about the externalities of life. Now I began to see that I could know, not exhaustively, but completely what life meant as a Christian by being a Christian. The outer realities had somehow become part of my inner world. I was being changed. I was being educated. I was being directed, but being directed back into myself, not into the technological or scientific rationalities of someone else. The questions now became pedagogically oriented. This was happening in me, to me. My questions were now, "What was the way to be with others so the unfolding of personal insight, personal understanding could occur? How can others, if I were to be a guide to the process, come to a synthesis of the outer external realities of the Christian faith and the inner unfolding of levels of growth?"

My knowing at this time was coming from reflections that were being informed by Christians who were, in mutuality with me, sharing

their stories and trying to find out what is true. Within my community, the knowing was arising from the reflection on the experience. I began to see experience as largely without meaning until I engaged in it, reflected on it, and looked at it again from different perspectives. I asked again the primordial questions about it: "what does it mean? What is the truth behind Christianity?"

The next five years were busy back in Canada, completing a Master's degree in Education, teaching school, and working as a consultant in physical education for the Red Deer Public School District. It was early in this period that my search for a community like the one in England led me to a church in Edmonton. It could best be described as fundamentalist and authoritarian. The operative notions in the church were discipleship, submission, church growth, and evangelism. Slowly the particular hierarchy within the church, with the leaders giving direction to the "sheep," was revealed. The meaning this had for me was control and domination, not the mutuality and ecclesia or "equal" access to meaning from my previous experiences.

In the midst of coming to a resolution about the church I began to rethink pedagogy. Here was a community that specialized in, and had refined the delivery of, content. The externalities of Christianity; the doctrine, the foundations, and the systems could be given form and presented to the "sheep" in tremendously emotive and stirring ways. I wondered about this church's insight into our interiorities. The questions now changed somewhat. "How should Christianity be informative into my interiority? How can we affirm each other and have appropriation of Christianity as pedagogy?"

Before a resolution was reached I left for a one year teaching assignment in Beijing, in the People's Republic of China. During this year 1983/84, with time away from the familiar, the question of my research crystallized. "What is the experience of Christian religious education like for others? In particular, what is the experience like for adolescents nearing the end of formal secondary school training?" Arising from this question were other questions. "Was there any real synthesis attempted in Christian religious education? Was there intentionally the integration of the "intended understandings" of Christianity with the inner active unfolding of the interiority of students? Were personal stories of the students heard? What was the particular way into students' sense-making? What was the nature of the relationship between community and student? What in fact were the purposes and goals of Christian religious education?"

Perhaps the greatest, most revealing insight was that I was experiencing Christian religious education. I had had encounters with others, and, I believe, encounters with God that were changing me. My story was being written in a particular way because of these particular situated wants, relationships, and activities. Therefore, the research was penetrating: a look into my interiority and particular experience as much as it was a look into the experiences of others. The closer I came to seeing and understanding my story and the experiences which wrote my story, the more carefully I saw and understood the stories and experiences of my participants.

I have, as a result, a dialectically and hermeneutically related research thread to one purpose of the study, which is an interpretation

of the experience of Christian religious education of two high school students. Here I am also looking into my own experience. The dialectic is that, in choosing ethnographic methods to look, I had become the research instrument. As a co-subject with my participants, we have informed and been informed by each other. There has been contact between us that has left us different than if we had not spent time together. We have moved beyond where we might have been.

The hermeneutical relation concerned the search for meaning in each of our "texts," that is, our experiences. There has been a discerning of our activities, of our histories, of our interactions, of our imaginations, of our futures, and of God's will in each of our lives.

The Model

The model for Christian religious education that I am using in this study was an articulation of the insights of Thomas Groome(a) (1981) and Bernard Lonergan (1979), and included the experience I have come to recognize as Christian in my own life. The model makes clear where I am situated regarding Christian religious education. The model is an image of two movements, an interior one and an exterior one, and how they are related. This model may prove useful in planning and evaluating curriculum, particularly if the model proves valid in relation to experiences of others.

The model grew out of the convictions settled on early in 1984 when the idea for this research began to become clear. These convictions are outlined later in this section. When I reexamined these convictions I found two movements: the inner or interior movement

within myself leading to intended reflective action, and the outer or exterior movement leading to intended reflective understanding.

In order to clarify and articulate these movements and to gain a deeper understanding of these movements, I attempted to bring an order, sequence, and rhythm to them so that the overall model would be faithful to Groome's(a) notion of praxis and to my personal experience. I sought to identify the dynamics of each movement and how they were naturally related to the other movement. I came upon an article by Thomas Groome(b) in Religious Education entitled "Conversion, Nurture and Educators" (1981) that came near to identifying the dynamics of the model I was attempting to describe. I was now ready to present the model in written form.

The two circles represent the two movements, intended reflective action (interiority) and intended reflective understanding (externality). Originally, the model appeared in a top-to-bottom format with one movement above and separate from the other. The three key aspects of the model, the continuous movement, the touching of both movements, and God's involvement, were not clearly evident. This model attempts to make clear these key aspects. The original model is explained in greater detail in Section III of this report.

Usually in our lives, and in teaching, the two movements do not come together. They remain separate and no "learning" takes place. No praxis is possible. When the circles, the movements, do touch, especially when a sensitive "other," a teacher or God, finds an inroad into the movements, then interiorities and externalities become meaningful and instructive.

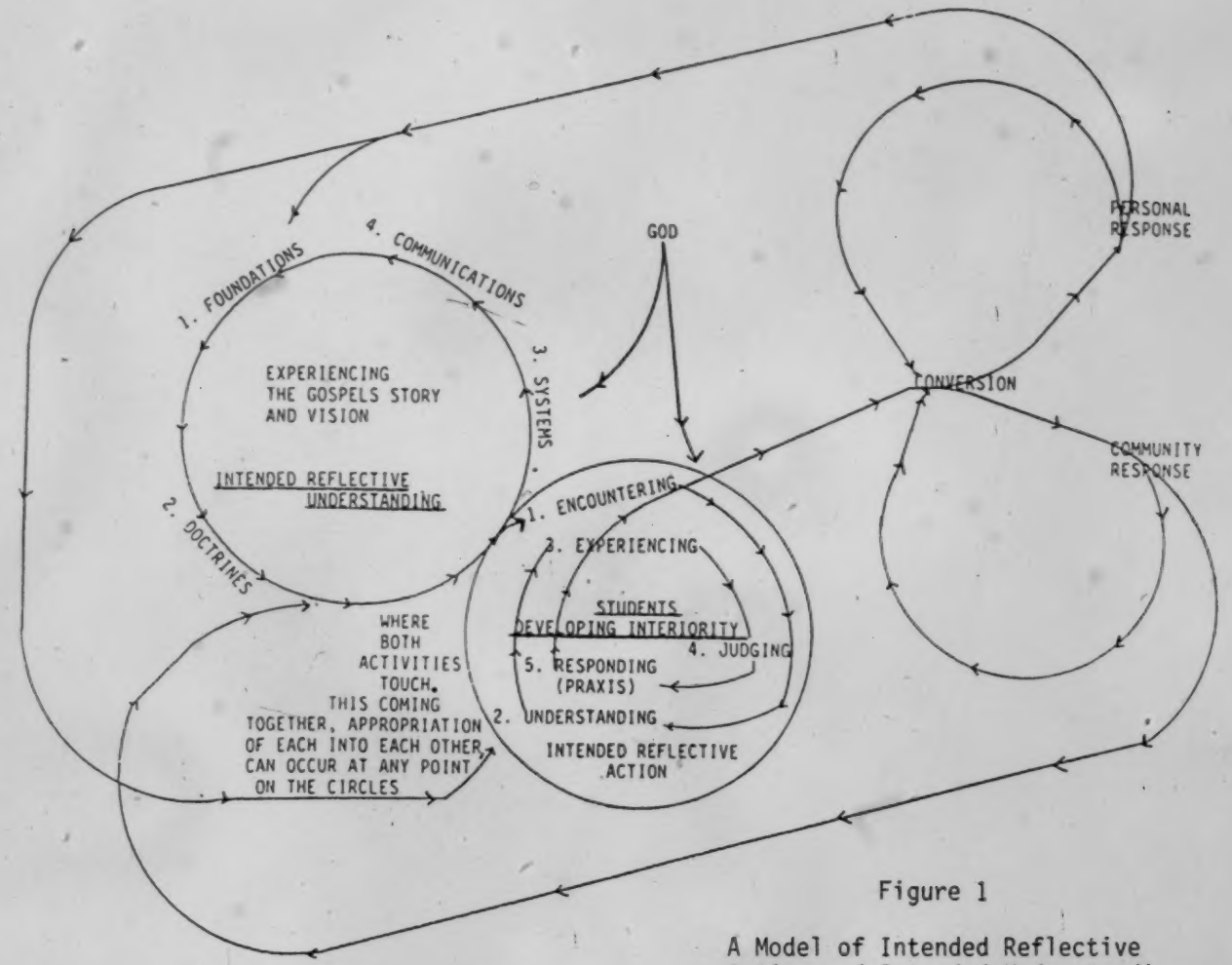

Figure 1

A Model of Intended Reflective Action and Intended Understanding.

The convictions which are the foundation of the models are those with which I began this study in 1984. They were and will continue to be redeemed into more right and true convictions in relation to God's kingdom. These convictions have been revised in Section II of this report on the basis of the findings from the ethnographic part of this study.

1. It is my conviction that, in the model, praxis and conversion work together in the Christian's life of intended action, a life of becoming and transforming. They are in a dialectical relationship as well as in a hermeneutical relationship. That is, praxis and conversion influence each other and cause the Christian to understand, with increasing awareness, the part each plays in faith responses.

2. It is my conviction that, in addition to the transforming function, the Christian Story has an informing function. The informing function of the Christian Story concerns the foundations, doctrines, systems, and communications of Christianity. Christians have been presented with the story and vision of the Christian community from the time of Christ. The story and vision, however, have been presented in an historically bound and contextually influenced way, with a variety of understandings of how this knowledge should come to be known, and how it can influence the Christian "way of being in the world." In each historical era, the aim of the presentation in preaching or teaching was what the participants believed to be the intended understanding of the Gospel's story and vision. I believe that there has been no pedagogic issue more central historically than this tension between the informing and transforming function of the

Christian story, for from this comes the historical Christian tensions between faith and reason and the known and knower.

3. It is my conviction that today, if one's intended action in the world as a Christian is to be genuinely redeeming for himself, herself, and others, then Christian religious education must begin with a recognition and affirmation of the "life-world" of this person. The participants in Christian religious education should begin with an encountering of their own personal story and vision. This initial movement says we begin where the participants are now and, in a spirit of mutuality, move to name personal actions and understandings (Thomas Groome(a), 1981).

4. It is my conviction that reflecting on personal action and understanding this action are key hermeneutical procedures in order for a Christian to critically understand why he/she is engaging in certain beliefs, assumptions, and praxis. This, in the Freirian sense, is the beginning of conscientization. The participants in Christian religious education, in a spirit of trust but in the realization of the potential existential danger of uncovering sources of praxis, may begin decoding their understandings and actions and engage in the question, "Why am I doing this action or carrying this belief?" (Thomas Groome(a), 1981).

5. It is my conviction that authentic conversion and authentic praxis in the form of a faith response can occur only when the Christian story is meaningful and made accessible for influence in the individual's Christian story and vision. By making available the teachings of both Jesus Christ and of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the participants can truly be informed and transformed. For Christian

religious education, this synthesis implies a recognition of selectivity; that which is to be conserved and not conserved. It means a recognition of the work of the developmentalists such as Fowler (1976), so that we can better understand and accept our present personal historical reality. It means attention to pedagogy, the models we adopt to present the story, and all this implies about what is knowledge and how do we come "to know."

6. It is my conviction that each Christian may reinterpret the Christian story and vision in his/her own context, appropriating the truths and letting the story affirm and, in some cases, disaffirm his/her story. For Christian religious education, this entanglement with the story means dialogue and articulation among participants of personal answers to what really are personal questions about how they might live more faithfully in the context in which they relate with others. Total respect and love for the individual is required here.

7. My conviction is that Christianity is a faith-way of being in the world that comes about from and influences one's relationship with God and others. For Christian religious education this way of being in the world means a personal response and a community response that is characterized by faith, hope, and love. Christians need a community that can help transform them and be open to transformation. This community includes church, school, neighbourhood, and home, and its members are open to conscientization about its dynamics of authority, freedom, conversation, liberation, sin, and righteousness. In essence, it is a community living a faith response to the hope and vision of the

kingdom of God that is already among us and one day will be, as Groome(a) (1981) suggests, complete among us.

My purpose was to investigate the experience of Christian religious education. My life experiences and hopes for a Christian religious education that truly does result in "Christians" have animated my involvement with the question. The next five chapters in Section II report the findings of my search in the way of descriptions, analysis, and conclusions. The titles of the chapters are the themes which have made up the experience of Christian religious education. These I have named Story, Community, Growing, Meaning, and God. These are the themes, I feel, which best represent the experience of Danny and Rita, and which interpret and inform my convictions.

SECTION II: RESEARCH THEMES AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER V

THEME ONE: STORY

The Background to Danny's Story

Danny describes himself as "unusual." He says, "... not your average guy traps and shoots." He is the eldest of eight children in a unique family. Five of the children in the family are adopted, one girl from Korea, a brother and sister from Costa Rica, and two sisters from Brazil. They live on an acreage in a modest six bedroom bungalow approximately thirty-five kilometers east of a large Canadian urban center.

Danny's parents consider him as the eldest to be the most responsible sibling. He says that the most important thing about being the eldest sibling at home is:

> ... at home I do what I'm supposed to do as a son, and as an older brother. I try to follow my responsibilities to the home, to my chores, and to how I act with my brothers and sisters when they bug me all the time. Seven little kids bugging you all the time. I've got to have better attitudes with my brothers and sisters, that's what I hear all the time.

He recognizes and feels a certain type of pressure from his parents to conform to a Christian lifestyle, as they interpret and live it. From teachers he feels the pressure of their expectations for him academically and for his future goals. Describing what his teachers are for him he uses the word "expectant." He says:

> ... (teachers) expect you to do what you're supposed to do. This places a lot of pressure on everyone.

Later, he states that their "expectations" are not totally and mutually experienced.

> They can't expect you to be good all the time. They have to understand your personality and base their expectation on your personality.

Also, he knows that his friends outside the Christian circle influence him significantly, though negatively. The type of pressure he feels from friends is seen in his "escapist" dream of living alone, hunting and trapping up north. This feeling is typical throughout many comments as he speaks about his desire to be free from peer and school pressures. Through escapism he deals with frustration.

Danny is a dark, slim, anxious-looking boy. He is five feet nine inches tall and weighs one hundred and forty pounds. He is not what his teachers call a good student. He attains average marks. He is not gifted athletically, as observed in physical education classes. He plays hockey, though not on a regular team. He has a reputation which he perceives is a "low-key" troublemaker. Being good all the time is "boring." Yet, he cannot fathom why television characters get away with pranks and wisecracks and he does not. He insists that he has no idea about what to become after graduation but is adamant about taking at least a year out for hunting and trapping.

The most outstanding features of Danny's home life are the discipline, politeness, and financial struggles that permeate all activities. Regarding discipline, I observed Danny being chastized one day at lunch for softly ridiculing his six year old sister for wanting to be a missionary. His mother strongly said, "I told you never to do that," and never during that incident did he raise his eyes nor reply

back to his mother. All children in Danny's family respond to their parents with politeness and submission.

The family struggles financially. Danny's father is a full-time doctoral student, teaching part-time at the private Christian school that his children attend. He is a concert tuba player and has played with various symphonies around the world, including the Israeli and Houston orchestras. He has a strong evangelical orientation and purposely seeks to share his understanding of Christianity with his university classes and his community.

Reluctantly, Danny's mother holds down a full-time position in a fabric store and feels guilty about this time being taken away from home responsibilities. An Israeli citizen, she has converted to Christianity largely due to the influence of Danny's father. Her family has had great difficulty accepting her Christianity.

Danny's refuges are a room downstairs, full of furs, traps, guns, and a trapline extending back two kilometres behind the house. On a blustery cold winter day travelling with Danny on his trap line, I observed a new, more open, and freer Danny than I had ever seen before. He has an amazing amount of knowledge about wildlife that he will eagerly share. People who question him about the morality of trapping he perceives as being "soft."

Danny's school is a large private evangelical Christian school in Alberta. It is an outreach school that is physically part of a local church. It uses Alberta Curriculum but hires only practising Christians. It strives to foster discipline, and to have teachers model Christian attitudes and beliefs in conjunction with promoting

student attainment of academic excellence as reflected in grades attained in the provincial departmental examinations. It does have a certain acknowledged "siege" mentality which has arisen from criticism levelled at Christian schools from opponents of private Christian education.

In dress, students are, by and large, typical, although a dress code prohibits jeans, tight clothing, and "immodest" clothes. Danny, describing how other students view him, suggests that he is average, fun-loving, and "acceptable." Danny does not appear to be part of the in-group. His non-trendy dress, lack of physical abilities in sport, and hobbies of hunting and trapping are not in the mainstream. Yet he displays a need for acceptance by his peers while maintaining his personal identity. He says,

> ... by the end of the year I really started shaping up my act and people started wanting to be my friend. They started to see that I was a little bit different than before. I was now a little more accepted.

Acceptance by his teachers has been harder to come by, particularly their acceptance of what he calls his chosen path of living. He says,

> The ideal teacher is one that is willing to understand your personality without giving you a hassle. If you ask them a question or anything, they'll listen to you at least.
>
> ... the teachers tell me what to do at school, how to act, what to write, what to think. They can suggest to me to do something, but they can't say 'you do this'. In the end they don't have the final say, I do. They see the consequences in the end, so they are like overseers here.
>
> The teachers are to be there to be <u>your</u> guide on <u>your</u> path. They should teach you about the dangers on this path. It <u>should</u> be yours but some teachers tend to be "follow me, do what I do because it's exciting ... become an English teacher."

Overall Danny feels that his teachers and parents exert an influence on him that is negatively "expectant." He says,

> What keeps me acting as a Christian is, I think, more of an expectancy. Your parents expect it really. It's not really at the center, but it's a push forward. They expect you to do it ... the school here; the teachers are like that, every situation is like that so everyone is like that ... you are not pushed to act any different so it's just become ... not life but a way a living.
>
> They expect, that is, they think you know, expect you to know, what God wants you to do or what you want to do. They expect a certain thing and you might not think that it'll be good to do it. You don't know whether it will turn out good or bad ... or what's going to happen, so sometimes it's a pressure because they expect you to do something and they expect you to know that that's what you're supposed to do and you don't know. You've not had any experience.
>
> ... if you don't act right you're in trouble ... so it's force for one thing, not driving a spike into your head type of thing, but telling you how to act.

For Danny, these expectations become more meaningful when they come from the "real" experiences of others. He says,

> ... they have to explain the process of negative influences from beginning to end, A to Z. They can't leave anything out, if they've done it they have to tell you what happened to them. I think it's more of a comparison, like what if that's me sort of thing. To say this is what might happen, well, "might" who cares? I want to know what did happen ... or what usually happens.

His orientation is towards learning from real experiences - the concrete and the experiential. He says,

> I don't always think about consequences. It's usually after the fact sort of thing ... I'll do something and then I'll remember it and say ... did I do that? Look at what happened as a result.
>
> ... as long as you become a Christian all you have to do is practice and slowly it takes time to get away from certain things. Now I basically have a lifestyle cut out for me, 9 to 3.

Danny's notion of God is that of miracle worker and omnipotent overseer. His motivation for living the Christian life is consistent with his perception of overly "expectant adults" in his life, and with a God who "... if he doesn't like you, you can be zapped."

> Ever since I was able to listen and comprehend I was told that the Bible was the word of God. God's the maker of all things. He's the miracle maker of all things. He can have whatever He wants and if He doesn't like you, you can be zapped. It's up to Him.
>
> ... I'm afraid if I backslide and seeing it's near the end ... the old dictator comes up and it's mark time I might just be a fool and take the mark and be in trouble ...

Danny sums up his attitude toward living for me once in these statements:

> ... this world is going to have wars, inflation, taxes, electricity bills, insurance ... everything adds up, things break down, kids that, clothes this, house that, style that ... money, money, money and everything goes to pot, that's all it does. I just want to be healthy ... I don't even think I'll live until I'm twenty-five.
>
> ... (If I knew the end was coming I'd) shape up my act and get ready for the big day ... I'd make my life amount to something.

The Background to Rita's Story

Rita describes herself as typical. She is about five foot three inches, dark-complexioned, and reflective. She is the youngest of four children, the only child at home in a single parent family. Her father died of a heart attack when she was nine years old while the family was living in Yellowknife. She describes the loss of her father and the subsequent years of family adjustment and interactions as the most influential experiences in forming her present orientation towards Christianity. She includes such experiences in this formation process

as forgiving the nurse who unsuccessfully attended to her father, looking to male teachers and priests more expectantly and favourably than female teachers and nuns, and to committing herself to her mother's welfare. She lives alone with her mother and is supportive of her, planning activities together and together making life decisions with each other in mind.

Her mother admits personally to a low-level commitment to Catholicism and to the church. She is not sure why and is curious about Rita's strong faith. The mother is a part-time student at the University of Alberta in the psychology department. She is a shy, quiet, matronly (grandmotherly) type person.

Rita is strongly motivated to grow in her faith, and mentions that this growth is in trusting, acting, and believing as a Christian. She desires to know God's will for her. Her family, moreso than school, contributes to this motivation. The major influence in Rita's life has been, and continues to be, her family. She perceives that her family influences her goals, expectations of others, and moral standards. She admits that the death of her father "matured her," and that having and respecting older brothers and sisters at this time was beneficial. She "... could follow them, they were never into rotten things."

A certain way of relating occurs in the family that Rita misses in school. For Rita, school tends to talk <u>about</u> the Christian life, while her family <u>lives</u> the Christian life. For Rita, religion classes should be a commitment by students and teachers to relevant and contemporary issues, not to historical facts. She believes that her

family is the most important influence and this results in the desire or vision that motivates her:

> ... because I want to be as important a part of our family as our older brother who has accomplished so much in my eyes and my sister's and my mom's. It's important for me to be as respected by them as they respect each other.

Rita is someone who, even in the quiet hours of solitude, seeks answers to fundamental questions. It was quite easy for her to decide to take part in this study because, as she said, "I have a lot to learn." Learning for Rita in the Christian religious education sense is about loving people, being more faithful and thankful to God, and about having a purpose in life. She readily kept a journal and her comments reflected an active inner world. She trusts that there are answers to her questions and that her faith is not in vain. The fundamental questions of life do not, however, paralyze her. Rather, she is aware that her life is one of responding to Christian and Catholic principles, in actions that are "Christian."

> To be a Christian means to be the best you can be, to stretch yourself beyond what you think you can do as far as being Christian. It means a lot of patience and self-discipline and I want to put a lot into it to get a lot out of being a Christian.

> Christian acts are the difference between being a Christian and not being a Christian. I think of people helping, caring for others in a Christian community.

She is aware of the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in her faith community. These, for her, are concretized in her home, school, and church youth group. She describes these dynamisms:

> ... a lot of people put into me my own expectations. I know my own capabilities and how far I have to stretch myself to grow, and church, friends, and family help too.

> They teach me a lot about myself and how I react to them and what they say. They teach me a lot about themselves which in turn teaches me about myself ...
>
> They cause me to think about my own motives, about what I do, if I act in a way pleasing to a Christian way of living.

Rita sees her life as converted to God. Her life-goals and actions come more "from God" than they are a push towards God. Thus she can say,

> I'm sure God created man with a purpose. I guess that man has sort of stumbled over (this) over the years. I don't know ... our happiness? I guess if we are happy with what He gives us ... then that happiness is something He'll enjoy.

The teachers and director at Kerygma describe Rita as a very good student, and a deeply committed and serious Christian. Kerygma is an "alternate" private Catholic High School in a large urban center in Alberta. It has just over one hundred students. Its credal statement reflects a desire for justice. It speaks of coming to a responsible position regarding oppressive structures in society so that the poor are raised up to places of dignity and autonomy. It is a school more in the tradition of the beatitudes than of the "salvation" and justification tradition of the evangelical Christian schools. It is currently funded primarily by the Sisters of St. Joseph. They see their mandate as one of initiation and maintenance of the school until the community decides that it is viable and want to take it over. This takeover in fact will happen beginning in September, 1986. A volunteer board administers the running of the school. Much of the activity in the school is geared in two directions: academics and personal/community growth and service.

The students are here by choice. No student, and no teacher, is here outside of a personal decision to be here. Teachers, in fact, have no fixed salary but negotiate with the director a salary suitable to the needs of the teacher. When the Sisters of St. Joseph leave the school, lay people will comprise the total staff.

The students must be involved in community service, the planning of para-liturgies, the governance of many of the school functions, and in a "walkabout," an involvement in an activity that stretches the mental, spiritual, or physical abilities of the student. The school promotes what the staff and students call an "atmosphere" of love and acceptance, a school with a difference.

The students are, in Rita's words, "typical." She says that it would surprise many people to see the "less than Christian" activities of the students after school hours. For Rita, these inconsistencies are frustrating as the school often is not "the school with a difference" as its motto states. One day I had an opportunity to talk with one parent who withdrew her son from the school because, to her, there was no difference between Kerygma and other schools.

Rita's faith in God comes from her belief that God is good and that "one always wants to follow what is good." From the time she was a child she has been shown what good means and what bad means. As a result she says,

> If you do something good you are rewarded and you are good and I want to be ... to be like Jesus, but that is impossible.

Reflecting on Our Stories

As the year progressed, at least two aspects of this research regarding the theme of story came clear. One was that my initial theory of the Christian religious education experience for Danny and Rita was going to change. The purpose in this study was to describe their experience. As I explored their life-world and uncovered themes, I began to see how my own experiences lent a perspective to the description of their experience. The more they revealed to me, the more my perspective had to be, and was, changed. The overlapping circles of our common orientations regarding Christianity and the Christian religious education experience, interests, contexts, and situations shifted and were subject to our mutual interactions and interpretations. The result was an assurance that each of their stories were heard by me, and that an ever-increasing circle of understanding of each of their contexts and of their interior world was truly being made possible in me. My own journal was one means of keeping my journey clear and for charting my own journey through this experience as my own horizons of understandings were being pushed back.

The second thing that became clear was that the theory that was emerging for me about their experience could be trusted because it was grounded in the material of their "stories." It was their stories that were being told as layer after layer of their reality was being unwrapped to reveal the essence of their experience of Christian religious education. Themes emerged from the research that were implicitly common to both Danny and Rita. They were common because both shared the need for affirmation, which is the first subtheme.

Therefore, while the subthemes within the theme of story have been given the same names for both Danny and Rita, the meaning of their experiences varies greatly. The four subthemes are affirmation, explanation, participating in the past's stories, and participating in the future's stories.

The term story is, in their experience, something that includes many stories. It includes the story of others, the story of the Bible, and the story of the Judeo Christian tradition. But most of all, for Danny and Rita, the experience of Christian religious education is about their stories, affirmations, explanations, pasts, and their futures.

Affirmation

Danny, rather than seeking affirmation in his life, seeks to avoid disaffirmation. He says,

> I basically try to keep other people out of knowing why I act the way I do because if they start flipping and finding, watching me, they'll be disappointed. Well, so I keep a lot to myself when it comes to things. I basically keep a pretty strict pattern during the day and week.

His statement is typical of many he made which were cries for affirmation of who he is. He says about his life path and affirmation:

> ... it should be yours but some teachers tend to be pushy. They say, well, follow me, do what I do because it's exciting. Become an English teacher, things like that. Not pushing it but suggesting it. They have to let you be who you want to be.

For Rita, affirmation comes when she recognizes and does what is intrinsically good. As Rita says, "I feel good when I do something not only for myself but for someone else." For Rita, this requires a

community to help her name the experiences to which affirmation rightly applies. She believes she is the starting point or the first place for affirmation and the action she engages in is the stopping place or the goal resulting from her being affirmed. In between, informing and transforming, are the truths of God. Affirmation becomes most immediately pervasive through her family. Rita says,

> My own conscience leads me to act the way I do and also I want the approval of my mom and I want the approval of what my dad would have thought. I look up to my brothers and sisters. I respect them a lot and I want to do something so they'll respect me.

Affirmation in and from the rest of Rita's community becomes most meaningful when it resonates with her own experience. She says,

> ... it's religious education along with my own experience. I know everybody has a different story and I don't know if I would turn out the same if A had happened instead of B.

Danny's and Rita's experience in affirmation are quite different. Danny feels affirmed when he is what others want him to be. However, he cannot and does not want this instrumentality operating in his life, so he keeps to himself, quietly avoiding conflict. He says his hiding place is his trapline where no one can touch him. While his teachers talk of memorizing scripture so it will come to mind later in life, he talks of needing to know now what scriptures mean. Danny wants to have scripture mean something now, to affirm what he is experiencing. Authority, control, purposes, and learning are operative notions in both Danny's family and school that promote his particular experience of affirmation.

Rita's experience of affirmation is more intrinsic. That is, her personal experience is affirmed through and in the community, not so

that she will change, but to show her that she is loved. Love is a word mentioned often in Rita's discourse, and not at all in Danny's.

In reflecting on Danny's and Rita's experiences of affirmation, it seems clear that two different forms of socialization were occurring. Danny's experience is oriented to the external realities of learning and purposes. His socialization experience is geared to acquiring something now that will be useful in the future. In this experience, Danny acts in order to avoid others knowing what he actually does. Rita's experience is oriented to the internal realities. Rita can say it is her own knowing of what is good and it is her own experience that animates her. She has a personal story that is being developed, told, and affirmed in her community.

Danny's and Rita's experience of affirmation is clarified further when viewed in the light of conscientization theory (Freire, 1979), community (Westerhoff, 1981), mutuality (Huebnar, 1982), and the integrating of students' stories and the stories of the faith tradition (Groome(a), 1981). Paulo Friere (1979) names a possible pedagogy where men and women have the ontological possibility of becoming subjects through processes of critical reflection and dialogue. This process of becoming subjects is achieved through dialogical investigation of reality and naming that which does not keep persons as objects, dichotomized from their world and from others. It is a sponsorship of conscientization whereby people become subjects and not objects in a social or political milieu. Friere's dream is men and women living intersubjectively, searching together for mutual decisions to named problems. This dream is an affirmation of people as subjects with and

among others. This characterizes Rita's experience. Her school encourages mutuality in decisions about the operating and directing of the school. This involvement is characterized by response-ability and accountability.

John Westerhoff (1981) proposes a pedagogy of affirmation of the experience of the person in unity and interaction with the tradition of the Christian faith. As the faith community socializes persons into the faith of the community, it affirms or should affirm each person's story as part of the formation and information of the faith community. Personal affirmation requires an affirming community. This type of affirmation is true of both Danny's and Rita's experience, though with Danny the faith community and tradition exerts a stronger influence on the individual. With Rita's experience, the individual is more affirmed.

Dwayne Huebner (1982) proposes a pedagogy animated by forgiveness and response-ability among participants. Where pedagogical encounters are not affirming, the encounters man has with man can be oriented to the instrumental, to denial, to domination, and to submission. The language systems of psychology do not genuinely affirm. They instead legitimize and control, and what is sponsored is a way of pedagogical being where learning and purpose are most promoted. This pedagogy generates a curriculum language of control, expediency, and economy. This type of pedagogy is more Danny's experience, as his school pushes for success academically and for results in the spiritual life of the students.

Huebner names a different type of pedagogical encounter; that is, a core of love that maintains freedom and is the ground of all human responsibility. The rationalities in this case are ethical where the encountering of humans is in love rather than in change. The change orientation is the technical rationality of a non-affirming pedagogy, and, like the political rationality which seeks "power over," is not grounded in love. In the ethical rationality, the educational activity is life, life's meaning and life's sharing of its own possibilities. What is most needed are affirming-generating rationalities and practices of humility, mutuality, promise, the language of poetry, forgiveness, conversation, and response-ability. This type of pedagogy is more Rita's experience and love is a word mentioned often in Rita's descriptions of her experiences.

Thomas Groome(a) (1981) proposes affirmation in the light of the integration of the stories of the person and the kingdom of God. He names it a shared praxis way of being with others. Here, "slices" of a person's story, once named and understood, can be brought to be shared with the stories of others and the story of the kingdom of God. The affirmation occurs in the sharing of stories as well as in the mutual calling forward of the community to vision, hope, expression of faith, and reflective action in the light of the kingdom. In both Danny's and Rita's experience there is, in each pedagogical context, an integration attempt of stories, the integration of the story of the kingdom of God and the story of the individual. Danny's experience is more transmissive and catechetically-oriented. Rita's experience is a more praxis orientation, as she is oriented to reflecting on and in her

actions as well as in putting action in her reflection. Danny's experience in his Bible classes is one where the teachers tell the class "the right answer." Up to this point of disclosure, he says the purpose of discussion is to see if the students in fact know the right answer. Rita's experience in her religion class is one where information about the Catholic Church's teaching is presented along with the Bible passages so that the right answer, possibly already residing in the students, is clarified.

Explanation

Rita and Danny want their lives explained so as to be clear and acceptable to others. They also want the world explained. Yet they are being sponsored in their school's pedagogy from knowing meaning in "that experiential reflective way" to a mind-knowing, where explanation ostensibly needs to make the most mind "sense." In short, both Danny and Rita want to know experientially what they mean, what they are, as well as what their external realities mean. They want this knowing to come under their own conditions. Rita says concerning explaining God to someone:

> Well, I can't prove it because it's faith ... I could explain it because it's faith .... What I've been taught ... I guess that wouldn't satisfy them because I feel that the God that I've been taught about is a good and loving God and I feel that in a way my prayers are answered. A prayer might be a hard thing to explain to somebody.
>
> It's a talking, a communication between God and yourself. I've never felt that God answers my prayers directly. I prayed and I talk to him and someday later when I'm looking outside it's when God talks to me ... when I sit at night, I can't hear anything. It gives me a good feeling to know that I am being heard and just talk out

> my spiritual wants and ... physical wants like family .... I don't know how else. I can justify my faith ... seems reasonable to believe in Him.
>
> It's documented and it's comforting to believe in something ... If I was in a different religion I'd probably believe in it with the same fervor that I believe in the Roman Catholic religion, but only if it wasn't unreasonable.

For Danny and Rita explanation is primarily for meaning. Danny refers to his parents explaining the hidden curriculum of such societal influences as drugs:

> They can tell you what they (negative influences) do to you, and they can tell you why they are appealing and why people get sucked into them and why they are so bad. They can't say "don't do that" because they are fun. They have to explain the process from A to Z. They can't leave anything out. If they've done it they have to tell what happened to them. I think it's more of a comparison like what if that's me? What might happen ... well who cares. I want to know what did happen or usually happens.

Explanation for Danny becomes valid when it is grounded in actual occurrences. Explanation for Rita becomes valid when it is reasonable and resonates with what seems "okay" within her.

For both Danny and Rita the meaning in an explanation is largely from the medium of the explanation. Therefore, about Bill Gothard seminars, Danny says,

> He has had living experience. A guy just doesn't get like that. I listened to him. He's not afraid to explain sin. His life is so clear I guess. Anyone who would praise the Lord for a car wreck and then get seven cars free the next day must be doing something right. There are just so many examples.

About the Catholic nuns who have educated her, Rita says,

> I learn best by just talking with and relating to specific people. Maybe the teachers should talk about themselves, not just the nuns because it's hard to relate to a Sister or ... I don't know if it's as hard to relate to a Father as it is a Sister. I don't know ... but I've

> always felt more comfortable with a priest than with a nun - with some priests, not all priests ... I don't know why. Maybe I just had some bad experiences with nuns in my past.

Regarding explaining Jesus, Danny reflects the concreteness:

> They (teachers) should explain His life, the way He acted, why He wasn't a snob, the way He treated people, why He wasn't rich, why He didn't call all His angels, why He didn't want to win, why He wasn't Mr. perfect. He failed sometimes and still managed to keep His image very good. We need to know why He did it and how He did it.

The explanations they hear, even when honest, are not always comfortably received. Rita, after her teachers explained the story of the church, expressed upset at the "unattractiveness" of the church's history. For her, the themes and morals of past stories should really be the meaning the past has for her. What the past means needs explaining as much, if not more, than the story events. The lay "people" need to know, Rita believes, the past events and what they mean. Knowing is not meant for the vested interests of the selected few. To know is for everyone. Regarding why people should know Rita says,

> ... because if they lose sight of it the people have to remind them ... we all have to know what's going on. You don't have to know the picky little details. You just have to know what happened and the implications. You don't have to know names and all that is important in its own way if you want to get into that deeply ... but if you just want to know what happened and why, and what we should do to correct it then ... I don't think it's that relevant or else we can say that this is what should have happened so if a problem comes up like that again we can handle it.

The process of explanation is experienced in a particular way by Danny and Rita. The experience of explanation is a mutual reconstruction process, where something or someone is made more clear

and more sensible by the shuffling of the ~~data of~~ the something or someone into a more suitable constellation. What should be birthed is the "I see" moment. Danny and Rita say they wait for this to happen and wish it would happen more.

For them, the explainer should act as an interpreter. They should first know the subject, the context, and most importantly, themselves. As a third party in this mosaic, the explainer, whether a parent or teacher, enters into the dialogue that is already going on between the subject and themselves. The explainer's role is not to impose meaning but to empathize and illuminate based on their interpretation of the student and the subject being explained. The explainer should have what Dilthey (in Polkinghorne, 1983) suggests is "an inner affinity" with both.

At the heart of their frustration with how explanation is being experienced is the imposition of meaning by teachers. Rather than midwifing the birth of meaning in them, they perceive that teachers are imposing meaning. They have an intuitive, though inarticulated notion of how explanation should be. In our time together, this notion became clearer. Their notion of what explanation should be resembled the explanation procedures of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ of the Christian tradition explained Himself in light of the Hebrew scriptures' prophecy, and in turn, explained the scriptures in light of Himself. He explained, as required by the context, in parables which, as Mary Boys (1983) suggests, "subverted normal consciousness." His explanations were often in terms of the natural world which "meant" something to the listeners. This is what

Rita means about trying to explain God or prayer to someone who doesn't believe; they have to be shown.

How explanations are understood arise out of the value orientation that Danny and Rita have, which they have been led to have from families and schools. Rita's mother, for example, has explained a Christianity of grace. Allen Keith-Lucas names this where the focus is

> ... not on behaviours but on the underlying motivation of thankfulness for the love, the promises and the presence of a living God (in Strommen and Strommen, p. 125, 1985).

Rita's experiences are full of this type of grace. She says she is overwhelmingly thankful just to come home and see her house there and to know there is a God.

For Danny, Christianity is understood as a violent process of getting things under control. Christianity has been explained as that indispensable product which must be embodied in verbal form and passed down to passive recipients. A Christianity of grace seems like a stranger to Danny. Christianity is not explained as, or at least not understood as, personally redemptive by Danny. The symbols which he uses to explain Christianity are those which he has received from his teachers and parents. The words are Christian, the meaning is his teachers'. While Danny and Rita desire to know what things mean, they say often they are, at best, given only their teachers' meaning.

What is a pedagogy of explanation that redeems? Strommen and Strommen (1984) suggest that young people, in their process of internalization of beliefs, need to be in the dialogical presence of adults who know their own position and can explain the reasonableness of it. This is true of Rita's experience and she is aware when it does

happen, though she admits she wishes it would happen more. The life of her most significant adults needs to be clear to her before they can be influential to her faith.

Thomas Groome(a) (1981) suggests a shared process between teacher and student of uncovering the motives and assumptions of named actions and beliefs. This initial phase in Groome's(a) notion of shared praxis is not often practiced in Danny's and Rita's schools. Particularly in Danny's experience, there is an emphasis more on the appropriation of bibilical principles into lived experience than on uncovering the basis of present actions and beliefs.

Kister Stendhal (1984) gives insight about explanation when, regarding preaching, he says that explanation is a meeting of meanings:

> ... the task of the pulpit is - as suggested here - the true sitz im leben, "life situation," where the meaning of the original meets the meaning for today.
> (p. 44, 1984)

Danny and Rita have made their meaning from the abstractions of reality. They also learn the meanings others have abstracted. In their understanding of other's meanings, their own stories have created the screen through which a sifting settles out meaning. Their language indicates what this meaning is. Danny's story, which is full of the expectations of his teachers and parents, is one screen which means he hears and practices the expectations of parents and teachers. In a sense, the "meaning of the original" statements and intents residing in their explanations is hidden by this expectancy. This original intent is not heard by Danny or by Rita all the time because Danny and Rita are often hearing something not intended by their teachers or parents.

Participating in the Past's Stories

More than one past is being shared and developed in both Rita's and Danny's families. Their families express their deep responsibility in being with each other as they share in the streams of mutual pasts. Danny speaks of the trust he came to have in God and in his family through these shared pasts:

> I've had a lot of situations in our house where it's been a miracle the way it turns out. You need money and the next day it's there. My brother didn't have any friends so we prayed for some friends and sure enough he gets some friends. Basically you see how He works in certain situations so you have to trust Him in every situation.

Danny realizes that this past can't change. However, the value he places on his past experiences has changed. Danny, in his struggle for acceptance, highlights an incident:

> Last year, the best thing that happened to me was when people started to see me differently. I was cracking jokes but it was negative and people's feelings were being hurt. By the end of the year I really started shaping up my act and people started wanting to be my friend and to see that I was a little bit different. I was a little more accepted. I've learned something.

The story of the Bible is for Danny a past of a particular kind. Regarding the Bible he says

> I think it is a history and a story put together ... sort of like a breviary in the sense of your life. It shows you what to do. It combines a history of what the world was and how people got to do things and how the great men did their things. It's more or less a guideline than a living book.

But for Rita the form and method of embodiment and transmission of the past is problematic:

> ... they (students) are not taking what the teachers and the Bible are saying seriously. It's a joke, something to make fun of. It's fine for here and now in the classes and when the teachers are around but I don't

> think they really believe it. It doesn't mean that much for them someplace, everyplace ... just sometimes.
>
> (The teachers) need to just be with us, maybe not so much preaching because that's what the church is really and that's good. But just talking with and relating to us ....

For Rita the story of the past of her church hurts and confuses as it informs and transforms her:

> I was quite disappointed taking the Reformation in Social Studies because I learned just how dirty the church has been. It's been through some pretty bad times and I'm not proud of it. It's kind of shameful that its such a conglomerate and a kind of a business. I think you have to look at things in the past to learn from them, like Hiroshima ... to correct them.

The question arising out of these comments, for Rita, is how should she be lead to engage in praxis with the past so it can be transformative. Rita says,

> You should come into our religion class ... it's really a joke ... it really is at least that's how a lot of kids in our class feel. There's one kid in our class who's a protestant and he's constantly putting down the Pope. Really, all the teacher is teaching is facts and history and we are not to discuss things. Religion class is not a discussion really, it's just this is how it happened. I don't know but I think if I could I would change that.

Rita names a particular power birthed by socialization that resides in her own individual past. This informs and transforms her present. When asked what in the past has led her to believe in Jesus she says,

> God is good. And you always want to believe in, to follow what's good. I mean from the time you are little there is good and there is bad. If you do something good you are rewarded and you <u>are</u> good and I want to be like Jesus ... but that's impossible.

It seems that Rita first learned good and then learned God. Her behaviour of being good is rooted in a consciousness of "I am good" as

others name this in her. The value systems and beliefs which inform this consciousness are the soil from which her actions grow, and were the best indicators of what she would say or do! She said God is good and that she wants to follow what's good. In a sense, she has been taught Christianity "formally", but what she ends up knowing is not logically connected to what she was intended to know. She knows experientially that God is good, something that can't be taught. In both Danny's and Rita's experience, the hidden curriculum of expectations, acceptance, and conversion end up being largely what they know, as in Rita's situation where she says she knows she is good because she has been rewarded.

This third theme within the stories of Danny and Rita includes the past in existential sense. For them, the past has to be made to live in the present. Mary Moore calls this "traditioning" where education regarding the past is for continuity as well as for change:

> The past and future not only stand in dialectical relationship with the present but actually become part of the present. The past story, present context and future hopes become part of the immediate experience so that the immediate experience actually incorporates them into itself. (p. 136, 1983)

Rita said often that she wants a relevant and contemporary orientation to religion classes. She wants to stay away from "... facts, facts, facts." For her, a parable from the Christian scriptures, for example, can actually become part of the present as she interprets it, and it speaks into her life now. The pedagogy Danny and Rita describe as likely to influence them greatest is one that accomplishes this integration of past with present experience. To illustrate, in Moore's traditioning model, the past experience is transmitted so as to be

interpreted into the new situation, where Danny's and Rita's experience or personal past illuminate it. This is intersectional. The tradition (past), the present context, the person's past, the future hopes, and God's spirit unite with a person at a particular place and time. This, for Moore, is how the past can become a traditioning component which actually lives. In Rita's experience, the past in the form of the scriptures or as the history of the church, is only useful if you can learn from it today. For Danny, these pasts are guidelines and are more important to him just as they are. To illustrate, he believes that the Bible is the inerrant word of God.

It is evident from Danny's and Rita's experience of learning about the past that the act and content of explanation of the past can best be meaningful as the explainer or teacher attends to certain pedagogic concerns. This includes the developmental place of the hearer, the theory of instruction, the meaning of meaning, and how we come to make meaning. As Moore suggests, traditioning education accomplishes this as it involves dialogue, curiosity, creativity, awe, hope, and integration of thought, feeling, and action. In essence, it is a pedagogy of affirmation of what the hearer is. Rita doesn't see this happening in the experiences of her fellow students. To them, the past embodied in the Bible is "a joke."

There are then with Danny and Rita two pasts. One is the past of the historical-cultural tradition within which they dwell with its own discourse, ways of meaning making, and normative behavior. There is a second past. This is their individual pasts which are the unique streams of each of their "stories," and which are the true facts of

their own stories. For Rita, her individual past is more meaningful, it seems, than the past of the historical-cultural tradition which she dwells in. For Danny, it seems his personal past isn't being affirmed as much as the "other" past, particularly that of the Bible as taught in his school classes.

The past of the historical-cultural tradition in Danny's evangelical context stretches back to the Reformation. It has, however, flowered within this century. In Rita's context, the roots are deeper, stretching back to the era of formal catechesis. Both pasts have shown power in Danny and Rita to generate memories which confront them. For Rita this is the unclean history of the church. It is in these confrontative memories that their experience of encountering the past of Christianity can be more fully understood.

Danny speaks of the way that the past of his historical-cultural tradition is being made available to him.

> We have Bible classes three days a week. We do Bible memory. In the classes we have our Bibles and, like last year, we examined Pilgrim's Progress with the Bible and with modern times as a basis.
> We use the Bible to prove something, as reference ... anything where verification is needed.

Rita's experience with engagement of the past and meaning making is slightly more experientially-oriented. She says regarding knowing whether certain behaviours are bad,

> ... it just comes from what ... everything that feeds into our conscience from the time you are told what's good and bad. At certain points your own conscience takes over ... it says this goes against that value.

Future

Danny's experience of forming a vision for his future is frustrating. I understand it as frustrating because many of his comments resonate with themes of escape, the imposition of adults into his life path, leaving home, and a deterministic lifestyle. Rather than forming in his imagination expectations and hopes for his own future, he is animated largely with the hopes and expectations of his teachers and parents. Once, during one of our more informal chats, he became emotional in describing how desparately he would like to live in the mountains and hunt and shoot. There, he said, he could really find himself and, since there was no temptation there, live a good Christian life. He never could articulate a vision for his life if it wasn't in this context of escapism. When I would ask him what he would want to be, his answer was full of what is socially acceptable behaviour, all with instrumental purposes; he says,

> I'd like to be more obedient, not so impatient, more diligent with things I don't like to do, but have to do ... be a nicer person, like everybody and have everybody like me.

His vision for his life seem truncated to the level of others' expectations for him.

Rita's experience is much more an autonomous one. She has experienced the processes of mutuality and dialogue in helping her shape her vision for her future. She accredits her school for freeing her to form her vision. She does, however, give her family, particularly her brothers and sisters, the greatest amount of credit in being examples which she is motivated to emulate.

Trust and faith in a God who contributes to the vision-forming process seem to be a part of the pedagogic process Rita experiences. The initial step in her forming a vision is her teachers' sharing their knowing and doing:

> You need to present the concept in a little bit then go over it with you ... do it together, then keep doing it together with you. It bothers me when we are told to do something when we don't know. If you are going to learn why service is an essential part of Christianity then just say a little of why and do it ... it will make sense as you go along, God is there ....

She adds about dialogue's role in vision forming:

> If we could, and I'm not saying we could reach any solutions or things like that by talking, but maybe it would make the class more enjoyable. I think you are going to learn something by listening to facts and hearing other people who are knowledgeable about what you are talking about ... if all that is valid and it makes sense to you it might change the way you treat people like ... I'll use an example. You know the discussion about AIDS ... everybody is just hands off? Like the lepers, well, even if you could make comparisons, inform people. A lot of people don't want to have anything to do with them ... if you come in contact with someone who said they knew someone or something like that ... in a hospital if you are candystriping and you came across a person who had it, you might be more willing to put what you know into practise, and be a little more kind, where as maybe you wouldn't otherwise.

CHAPTER VI

THEME TWO: COMMUNITY

Danny's Community: Alliance Christian Community

Alliance Christian Community is a large private Christian school in Alberta. It houses kindergarten to grade twelve, and has over three hundred students. Virtually all students are bussed or driven to the school as the school attracts students from a large radius. The students come primarily from homes where the parents profess some form of evangelical Christianity although the school policy does not limit enrollment to Christians. The principal suggested once that since many of the children from the "Christian" homes are themselves not Christian, having students from other religious orientations just means greater emphasis on fostering the "born again" experience in the school. He said that students are given many opportunities in chapel class or in meetings in the adjoining church sanctuary to have this experience by accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. For the students who have accepted Jesus Christ, the emphasis is on training and informing them in the principles of Christianity as it has been interpreted in the doctrinal statements and educational philosophy of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (see Appendix A).

The school stresses academics. Throughout the year that I spent in the school it became clear that the staff and principal were particularly sensitive to the somewhat negative climate that exists in many educational circles in Alberta regarding private Christian schools. This climate has been characterized by complaints of intolerance and nonunderstanding by the Christian schools and of poor

academic standards. The school staff at Alliance Christian Community function very much with their faces to the winds of this climate and therefore strive to have academically-superior programs. Alberta Education curriculum materials are used virtually throughout the school from kindergarten to grade twelve. The school takes part in government examinations at the four levels at which all Alberta students are tested; grades three, six, nine, and twelve. The principal and staff look at test results very closely and regularly make comparisons of marks with schools in Alberta's public school system.

Alliance Christian Community is a Category One private school in Alberta's five level classification system of private schools. Therefore it has met the approval of Alberta Education by using accredited teachers and approved curriculum. However, not all private Christian schools in Alberta are doing so and many are mainly using "American" curricular programs like A.C.E. (Accelerated Christian Education). A.C.E. is a program that uses individual paces or workbooks so that students can, under adult monitoring, work at their own pace through the particular program, whether language arts, mathematics, or science. The paces are infused throughout with references from the Bible and the goal is for students to become integratively grounded in the Bible's passages, in and through the subject matter. Accredited teachers are not perceived as needed to monitor this program. Many strong Christian communities in Alberta, wanting to keep all government and other "secular" influence out of the education of their children, use A.C.E. or another curricular package, Alpha and Omega, and have hired parents or church members to monitor and serve in the teacher role. Along with

the reduced access to facilities and complaints of intolerance, this has been at the heart of both the philosophical and practical dispute in Alberta over private Christian schools.

Alliance Christian Academy has been a leading private Christian school in Alberta in attempting to work with both sides. Many of its staff members work on joint Alberta Christian school projects to prepare curricular materials that will sponsor integration of Christian principles and the subject matter of academic curriculum. The thrust of the projects is towards programs and materials that will sponsor an integrated Christian rationality in students so that students will, as one teacher once told me, "see the world and understand it as God sees it."

Alliance Christian Academy is characterized by a number of elements or themes (see Appendix H). One theme is that the school is an extension of the home. Its staff are to support the notion that the home has the first and main responsibility for the education of the child and the school "stands in" for, and cooperates with, the parents. Another theme is that of the secular world versus the Christian world. The school sees the necessity for educating in a God-centered and Christ-honoring way because, quoting II Timothy 3:1, false teaching and deception will abound. Removal of Christian children from public schools is seen as a necessity. A third theme is the emphasis on discipline. The staff are to support a certain dress code, behavior, and accountability for actions and academic work. Discipline, as I observed, was strict but was not without concern for both the students' perceived overall welfare and the educational philosophy of the school.

The emphasis on discipline is based on their notion that God sustains all life and all life is related to Him. God's principles, as found in the Bible, speak of obedience, growth in knowledge of God, and of "man" as sinner. Therefore discipline is a necessity to promote ultimately a personally chosen response to these principles and to maintain an optimum environment for learning. A fourth theme is that staff must be "born again" Christians in attendance at a local church.

The school itself is a large modern two story, L-shaped building adjoining the church which sponsors the school. It has a large gymnasium, and a full-time physical education teacher is employed. It has school athletic teams in volleyball and basketball that compete with Christian and non-Christian schools. It has an excellent record in track and field in the county. The school has a very successful music program with its band having competed successfully in local music festivals. Danny plays in the wind section and is considered by his teacher to be a fairly good wind instrument player. Overall the school is bright, clean, and on the basis of its facilities, library, and day-to-day efficiency of functioning, would be favourably viewed by the most critical inspectors.

Many aspects of the school-life surprised me throughout the year. The high school students became used to me as I wandered the halls or stepped into classrooms. It was in this familiarity that guards were dropped and the real life of the community came to be revealed. More than once I was bumped into in the rush between classes and asked impatiently to move out of the way. Once a student came up behind me and made some gesture which delighted the two or three students

standing in the aisle. These incidents, though curious, were rare and primarily I came to be accepted as an unobtrusive part of the school fixture. Students would neither acknowledge my presence nor reject me as the year progressed. They did not seem particularly interested in what I was doing.

The staff came to call me the shadow. I was introduced to the staff formally in a Monday morning chapel service late in September. From then on throughout the year, individual staff would tentatively probe me regarding my work and what I was really about. It seemed they were interested, but I was always left with the feeling that they were not too sure if they understood my work or believed just how worthwhile it was to "hang around" and describe someone's experience. The staff impressed me as sincere, hard-working, and pleased with their jobs. At times the negative talk in the staffroom about some unrepentant child or about the pastor at some church asking for more money surprised me. Yet I came to know these people as teachers who took their mandate to educate in a "Christian way" very seriously. As one teacher told me, it would not be unusual to have a teacher break down and cry over the problems of one of the students. This indeed was what I observed, teachers genuinely concerned about their students' welfare.

The principal of Alliance Christian Community, Mr. Creighton, is a large and easy-going person who impressed me as someone with classically "quiet strength." As an ex-hockey player having played Junior hockey in Alberta, he moves like an athlete, albeit one who has added a few pounds since his playing days. Calmness and sensitivity characterized everything I observed him do.

His job, as he views it, is a juggling act. He must appease a church board that finances the school and oversees the overall philosophical thrust of the school. He has to work with parents who have varying expectations. He has to lead his teachers and be visible to his students. His only reluctance in taking a part in this study were his already overwhelming time commitments. His agreement to take part in the study was, as he put it, an important step in finding out how the students think and feel about Christian religious education.

I found Mr. Creighton to be open and honest, yet always diplomatic about the school. He admitted, refreshingly, to weaknesses in himself and the school. He was appreciative of his two assistant principals for bolstering in areas where he was not strong. His greatest satisfaction and encouragement comes by students doing well on government exams and by students making faith commitments to Jesus Christ. He is most discouraged by roadblocks that have been created to the optimal running of his school. These include the meetings, paperwork, and the 75% per student grant funding allotted to Category I schools which restricts prpgrams.

Mrs. Neibhur, Danny's religion teacher, is a warm, tall, attractive lady in her early forties. Being near her, at times, can best be described as being near a blizzard. She impressed me as an energetic person who rarely walked between classes or meetings. Mrs. Neibhur has a candidness that often disarmed me. She talked openly about her teaching, her background, and her vision for her students.

I particularly found that her discomfort and dissatisfaction with Danny to be confusing for me and somewhat incongruous with what I was

understanding as a deep love and acceptance for all her students. What was at the heart of the dissatisfaction I never uncoverd. At best she would reveal that Danny has "problems" and, in her words, these would be very difficult to overcome.

About her students she often spoke of "their personality" or "their growth," speaking of them as if they were a single entity. She could describe the successes and failures of her class as far back as two years ago. For her their problems and her life were inexorably interwoven. God was doing something in her life while He was working in their life. Yet Danny was an anomaly to her. He was someone who was not quite as open and honest as he should be. More than once she intimated that she questioned the policies and procedures of Danny's homelife. Unfortunately, the feeling throughout the year was mutual on Danny's part. It was obvious he knew Mrs. Neibhur's feelings about him and this probably influenced the opinion he had about female teachers who "didn't know what it is like to be a young man growing up."

Rita's Community: Kerygma High School

Kerygma is an alternative Catholic high school of slightly more than one hundred students. It is located in a large urban center in the West, but up until June 1986 it was run and financed by the Toronto-based Sisters of Saint Joseph. During the 1985/86 school year, the Sisters of Saint Joseph decided to call back the school director, Sr. Mariam, and the two sister teachers, and to turn the school over to the community and to the parents interested in the concept of Kerygma in the West. It was hoped that they would be willing to perpetuate the vision of an alternative and radical Christian school. This move had

always been part of the mandate of Kerygma so it was not totally unexpected. The move was, however, met with some sadness as one departing teacher told me she felt the job was not completed yet.

From the beginning of the school, the idea was to "... invite to something radical." This is from the philosophy statement of Kerygma. The goal is -

> ... learning to work at learning how to become a faith-community that truly reverences the uniqueness of each person, that is willing to speak the truth in love; to support each other in the laying down of our lives in service; to live cooperatively in an interdependent world, infusing all of life with the justice that flows from reverence. (Philosophy Statement, Kerygma)

The school opened in 1982 and, in what was clearly a step out of the existing Catholic High School system, offered itself as a radical school with a difference. The difference has been philosophically the same for the past four years. The threads or themes of the difference are that teachers are to genuinely care for the students; that teachers are to radiate warmth, interest, and enthusiasm for life, and that teachers will challenge students to develop their full potential as human persons.

The students come from many parts of the city. Virtually all the students, with the rare exception, are from Catholic homes. They must, of their own volition, state that they choose to be at Kerygma. They must also agree to give two hours of service a week to some church or community service. They must also agree to participate in a "walkabout," a school program where they choose a demanding activity or program and attempt to master it physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

The students, I found, were not in the least concerned with my presence in the school. Some students became almost flippant with me, throwing out a less than meaningful "hi" and giving me the same rough ride they give each other in the halls during class changes. They were much more contemporary overall in appearance than I had expected. Earrings were worn by some boys, as were contemporary hair styles and, ostensibly, the most fashionable clothes. The girls were overall much more conservatively attired; yet, they too were contemporary with the fashions and discourse one might find in public and Catholic high schools. I noticed, to my surprise, a number of occasions where the notions of reverance and respect for the individual as stated in the philosphy statement was not operative in the interactions in the school. Boys and girls were often observed caressing and kissing, and, on more than one occasion, I heard hurtful remarks directed to overweight students. Rita often told me that most people would also be surprised at the lifestyle of many of the students after school hours. For Rita, the single most distressing aspect of Kerygma is that the notions of Christian atmosphere, reverance, respect, and "school with a difference" do not ultimately affect and permeate many of the students' day-to-day lives. I once asked Rita how she manages to avoid this soft underbelly and she said that she would not want to give "those students" the benefit or pleasure of seeing someone else behave that way.

Kerygma is a Category One school, having received approval from Alberta Education in September, 1982. Its staff members are fully accredited, and its course of studies is that outlined for the province

of Alberta with additions and adaptations that are permissable within Alberta Education's guidelines. Therefore religious education is integrated into the whole academic program as well as accepted as a separate subject.

Through the academic program, two large themes are being promoted. One is success in Alberta Education's examinations. The second is summed up in these sentences from the philosophy statement (Appendix I):

> Through this academic program, we try to foster within our students a desire for learning, independent thinking, responsibility and accountability, and growth in the ability to set challenging goals for themselves. This is done by trying to match teaching styles with learning styles of the students, and by means of varieties of assignments which require initiative on the part of the student.

Through the infusion of religious education, one multifaceted theme is being promoted. This theme is stated in the purpose statement:

> Kerygma is an alternative coeducational senior Catholic High School whose aim is to graduate young men and women of gospel value conviction, reverence, cooperation, justice, love, service and responsibility, who are determined to shape their environment and to work with all people of good will to change the oppressive structures which bind the people of the world.

The principles, goals, and objectives of Kerygma are based on the academic and religious themes that undergird the school functioning (see Appendix I).

Sr. Marian, the director of Kerygma, warmly and openly drew me into the school and accepted my research project wholeheartedly. She felt that this type of study was long overdue, where the actual experiences of students in such schools would be revealed. She personified for me virtually all the elements of Kerygma's philosophy.

So disarmed was I by this sixtiesh, small, blue-eyed sister that it was twenty minutes or so into our first meeting that I realized she had not said a word and that I had talked nonstop. She seemed to have the capacity to open herself up to me throughout the year. However, it became evident that she was this way with everyone in this, her first year of the directorship. The result of this concern, I suspect, was the tiredness that the teachers and I could not help notice settle in as the year progressed. I would still describe Sr. Marian as an indefatigable idealist who continued to believe in the school philosophy and most of all in the people she knew who had entered into the philosophy of Kerygma. One day, noticing my intensity and struggle surfacing as I grappled with the nuances of the research I was engaged in, she sat down with me in her office. She sensitively and, quite unaware to myself at the time, directed me to see that I was now spinning my tires and was really trying to do and to be too much in this process. She suggested a book to read and I left her office renewed as if I had just finished a long spiritual retreat. Sr. Marian returned to Toronto in June, 1986, and is working in the community there.

Sr. Joan and Mr. Francois were two teachers who seemed particularly interested in both Rita and my research. Both taught Rita. Sr. Joan taught social studies and religion and Mr. Francios taught French. For Mr. Francois the greatest difficulty with Kerygma is with the emphasis on social justice. He feels students need first to come to know God and themselves, and, since many of Kerygma's students have not attained this "maturity," this should be the primary

focus of the school. Sr. Joan, on the other hand, feels somewhat frustrated with her students' inability to step outside of their personal contingencies and learn about the history of the church and the gospel principles. She wants them to serve in the community in more unselfish ways.

For both Danny and Rita, groups outside the school community are very influential. Rita's other significant community involvement is with her youth group at her church. This group provides for her a forum for fun, dialogue, and for trying out new ideas. She credits the youth group with being a buffer between her and some of the negative influences she perceives are around her.

Danny's only other significant community outside his school and home is his trapline. There he can be his own boss and, as he says, do things in his own way. I saw a totally different, more open, and free Danny on one cold late winter day when I accompanied him on his two mile line. Hoping not to see some poor animal trapped, and wondering about the morality of all of this, I travelled into his world, into a part of his community that gives and makes important meanings for Danny. There Danny is independent, successful, and a decision maker.

In both Danny's and Rita's experience of Christian religious education, the community is made up of particular activities or themes. These themes are the substructures of their experience of community, and are the ways in which community is experienced. Their community is an expecting one. It is also a community that dialectically sponsors understanding of its members and of itself. It is a community that informs. The community functions to inform about things in the

community. Also, it informs into its members, informing them about themselves. It is a community that is an atmosphere. It is also a community that is open to being served and gives opportunities to serve. Finally, it is a community where adult males and females are experienced as models in unique ways by Danny and Rita.

The Community of Expectations

The experience of community for Danny is characterized by expectations. These expectations are, for Danny, about how he should be living his life. They concern his activities, his responses, and his attitudes. It is these expectations of his parents and teachers that Danny credits most with keeping him acting as a Christian. He says about the particular type of influence exerted on him by their expectations that

> ... I think it's more of ... an expectancy. Your parents expect it really. It's not really at the center but a push forward, they expect you to do it. The school here, the teachers are like that too, the whole situation I live in is like that, so everyone is like that. You are not pushed to act any different so it just becomes ... not life, but a way of living. But because, not that other people do it, but ... because other people do no differently. You can't believe in God and inject yourself to the gills with drugs ... it doesn't make any sense. If you are going to do it, you might as well do it so you know what you are doing ... and not just go half way and back out when it ever so pleases you.

For Danny, the continual influence of expectations from home and school has produced in him an extrinsic notion of obedience. He says often, "I do what I'm supposed to do." This emerged when I asked him what the expectations are in church and home. These were his comments.

> B. How about in church, what are your reactions to their expectations?

D. ... apply what I hear. When the preacher says something, I do it.

B. How about home?

D. ... at home I ... do what I'm supposed to do as a son, an older brother, an oldest brother. I try to follow my responsibilities to the home, to my chores, to how I act with my brothers and sisters when they bug me and to do work that I don't want to do. With six little kids bugging you all the time I ... got to have better attitudes with my brothers and sisters, that's what I hear all the time. This is my expectation.

As the year progressed, so did my anticipation that Danny's dissatisfaction with the weight of this expectancy would result in an explosion of emotion and some form of "unacceptable" behavior. This explosion occurred in the spring and is described in the chapter on Meaning.

Rita is not nearly so compliant. She said regarding her reactions to the church's expectations that she doesn't accept what is said simply because it comes from an authority. She wants to find out for herself.

For Danny, the expectations of his female teachers are not viewed as being realistic or necessarily appropriate or fair. When asked if he felt he was being treated fairly here at the school he says,

> It depends on what you mean ... do you mean "actions ... the school as a whole? or just me? Okay ... there's a lot of times when ... the male teachers treat the males better then the female teachers do. A lot better. The female single teachers are used to getting their own way because they don't have anyone to contend with. As soon as a kid argues with them he's a smart brat. All the female teachers, except a couple, have no idea what's going on and should get a lesson in psychology. All the male teachers know, they did that when they were younger while the female teachers were playing with Barbie dolls. You just don't know, it depends on the teacher.

For Rita, the expectations of the sisters who teach at Kerygma are somewhat unrealistic. She is not sure why she perceives this but suggests she is more amenable to the expectations of priests and her male teachers. Also, she continually pointed out to me that it is not the expectations of others that motivates her to act as much as it is the expectations that "feed into her own expectations for herself." She is evaluative of what others expect from her and, by far, she is more open and responsive to the expectations of the positive role models in her life, of her brother, her sister, and her mother.

The Understanding Community

Another part of the Christian religious education experience for Danny and Rita in and through their community is understanding. There seemed to be a dialectical relationship between their community and their experience of understanding. As they were being understood by members of their community, they were more understanding of the community they live in.

The understanding desired by Danny is flavoured with his desire for acceptance. He does not perceive that his teachers really know him or, in mutuality, are with him. Therefore he feels misunderstood and continues to hide who he really is. I asked him once to describe an ideal teacher. He said,

> ... a teacher that is willing to understand your personality without giving you a hassle. If you ask them a question on anything, they'll listen to you at least and give you feedback on it. If you have some trouble with a question or you had trouble in another class they'll try to straighten it out. They won't just say, well, don't hang around with that kid anymore. And they try to look at life at your level. They know what's

going to happen, but they have to pretend they don't, yet they do. They have to be like us to teach us, but still be the authoritative figure I guess.

He feels that his community is not being successful in understanding him and what it is like to be a young male growing into adulthood. He feels that there isn't anyone in his community, particularly among his female teachers, who affirms him or understands him. This exchange reflects this:

B. Are your parents and teachers reaching their goals for you?

D. Some of them, some of them no. I guess they can't ... they really don't know because I'm the guinea pig in the family. They have some standards that are too high, some too low, some in the middle. The ones in the middle are the hardest. They'll always say "physically you may be this, mentally you are only this."

B. How do you handle that?

D. I just say ... yesterday I was such a mature man, today I'm such a little kid ... they always switch, one day you are the man and the next day ... I just let it go, hibernate in my room ... get away, try to stay away from everyone.

Understanding is not as hard to come by for Rita. She believes that the community she lives in allows and encourages her to question and, in essence, to make her own decisions for her life. This freedom seems to be the foundation on which she understands her place in what she calls an unjust society. The world is unjust so schools like Kerygma are needed to turn out good, understanding-oriented people to deal with the world. I asked her once if her school allows her to be who she wants. She said:

R. ... I think so ... I would say ... they're understanding. They like you to look at issues and

examine what you do. By making you think like that, it's part of helping you come to understand.

B. Is there anyway they're not ...

R. Well the only way they wouldn't be is by not allowing you to ask questions, or asking questions that are not answered ... if I have a question, I'd like an answer, I don't want to be told that that's just nothing. If I have a question that is opposite of what she's teaching, it's not what she's teaching so much as ... well, you have to examine for yourself.

The community for Rita allows her to decide for herself while she comes to understand and become conscientized to its problems. She says about the limitations and possibilities of her community that,

> You realize you are the one who controls your own fate really, God gives you the choice but you're the one who makes the decisions. The same thing goes for elections, and issues, war, abortion ... we really need to take a stand and realize where you stand and involve yourself with what is going on.

Rita's understanding of the role of the community that teaches is one similar to Mary Moore's model of the traditioning community (1983). In her model, continuity and transformation are dialectically brought together so that the community's cultural tradition and history are animated by what is contemporary in the individual's and the community's experience. The individual's and community's experience somehow became part of the community's tradition and history. For Moore, as it is for Rita, neither are static. Rita says that the community accomplishes this though she is not too sure she knows how this works for her. She says,

> I don't know ... I don't know what would make kids, my friends even understand. What would be more meaningful in classes would be if we could talk about things like social issues like AIDS. I don't know if there has to be a special class set up. I don't know. That would almost be like social studies and I know you have to learn

> history too. But one day this is going to be history and people 50 or 60 years will be studying what's going on now ... it doesn't seem right, we should be studying what's going on now, now.

The church, on the other hand, affects her most at the level of the understanding of her motives. She says about the church:

> The church causes me to think about my own motives, about what I do. If I act in a way that's pleasing to a Christian way of living then I think it's because of the church's influence. I like it, it is partly because of the church's influence that I think and understand my own motives.

The Community That Informs

Part of the experience of community Danny and Rita have is of their community informing them about the externalities of their particular religious orientations. In Rita's experience, this informing concerns how to serve in the community and what the history of the church has been. For Danny it is, as he says, "informing about the things of God."

The community is also informing them about themselves and who they are as Christians, as this is interpreted in each of their contexts. In Danny's experience this informing concerns the evangelical Christian belief that all people are by their nature sinful and therefore need to turn to Jesus Christ in a born again experience. For Danny, informing about those externalities of his faith has been his predominant in-school experience. This one exchange shows what Danny wants regarding informing:

> B. Should teachers, parents, let you examine issues or should they tell you what's right or wrong?
>
> D. They should tell us what's right or wrong <u>after</u> letting us examine.

B. What's the point then of letting you examine?

D. Well ... to see if we know off hand what it is. If we get it right, fine. If we get it wrong then we've got to be told that the other thing is right. See, if you get a choice, it doesn't go as far as letting you make a mistake, because right away you are turned around and you know what's right ... and you see the thing. It's important to let the kid make a mistake, but don't let him go too far with it.

This is what the experience of informing is like for Danny:

B. How does school help you with your actions ... your own actions?

D. If you don't act right, you're in trouble, so it's force for one thing - not force like hammering a spike into your head, but ... they tell you how to act, so they're not, if they act right, hypocritical. So you can't say na na na ... they have to act what they say ... so they tell you how to act by showing you and they tell you not to do it and there are consequences. So they tell you and show you and that's basically it.

B. That's all they can do for you?

D. ... they can't live it for you.

The teachers' lifestyles inform as much as do their words. Danny experiences much of the informing in his school as another type of expectation. This continued to be a pressure for Danny throughout the year. He feels that teachers expect too much with too little emphasis on the type of relevant informing that Danny needs to genuinely influence a life pilgrimage that is of his designing:

B. Is that expectancy sometimes a pressure for you to sometimes be something you don't believe you are?

D. Well, sometimes it is when they expect you to understand. If there is a situation and you don't know how to cope with it and they've already been through it, so they can see what happened before, during and after it ... and what they thought. It was their experience. But you're going through it and you don't know. They expect, they think you

> know, expect you to know what God wants you to do or what you want to do. They'll expect you to do a certain thing and you might not think that it'll be good to do it, like a certain situation with a school or a teacher, or ignore, do this ... you don't know whether it will turn out good or bad ... or what's going to happen so sometimes it is a pressure because they expect you to do something and they expect you to know that's what you're supposed to and you don't know ... you've not had any experience.

Danny says teachers informing about their experiences or Christian notions are partly responsible for creating this pressure of expectancy. He feels he cannot, nor does he want to, repeat someone else's experience. He wants an end to this particular impositional type of experience of informing. He wants to be guided to reflect on his own experiences, to be informed about his own experience. He feels that the school's Christian "greenhousing" of students is not the way of accomplishing this type of reflection:

> They could keep me on my path by basically letting me be what I want ... they have been telling me what to do and what not to do ... saying don't do this, there is no good money in this job or this field ... Maybe that's what you (teacher) think, but that's not what I want. They've got to treat all the actualities of life equally ... give equal negative and equal positive points. They have to help you understand your own life.

B. What should this school be teaching for?

D. Well besides the obvious, they should teach Christian religious education and things like that. I think it was made to give young people a better insight into the things of God and things like that. Also, not to get them into public school and everything that goes on there. Not to be tempted by things as much as they would be although I must say it has got to the point where it isn't even talked about in here.

B. In other words, this school should be for getting you out of "the world."

D. Yes, I'd say it is the main thing but I don't agree with it at all.

The consequences of the way Danny experiences the process of informing are evident in Danny's orientation to extrinsic motivation and to the type of morality characterized by his predisposition to act, not on an internalized set of moral principles, but on "who is watching." I asked him once what kinds of people speak clearest to him, and who, when they inform him, have the most credibility. He said,

> Someone who is not revengeful or loud. Just a basic all around Christian character. They have to have consistency. They can't be it at church and school and not somewhere else. They have to let it be known not by bragging but when a situation comes up they'll give an example of what happened to them. Or if something happens in the school, they're just living up to the way they are no matter what happened. You cannot be Paul & Silas at school and nowhere else and if someone sees you somewhere else, they don't care who you are or what you're doing in the school. They know you are wrong ... you have to be it a 100% of the time because you don't know who is watching.

For Rita the experience of the community informing is an experience that involves a wide variety of information sources all intending to sponsor personal and confidently-made decisions. Rita's level of conscientization regarding the purpose of her school and the integration of God into the curriculum through the experience of informing is revealed in this exchange:

> B. How can this school help you know what is wrong?
>
> R. Well, informing your conscience. You have to have a wide variety of information sources so you can see what is right and wrong and you can discuss it from a Christian or Catholic viewpoint .. or a personal viewpoint because some of our opinions will differ from the church's? You discuss it in all sorts of different lights to come to a consensus because no one can really say whether it is right or wrong. In mathematics there is God in mathematics. There is

God in social studies, church history. I would restructure everything not to go around God but right to Him.

B. What's the best way for a teacher to do this?

R. I don't know. I just came up with this on my own. I don't know how.

B. Do you think other students would appreciate it?

R. I think it would become more meaningful. I think you could add religion to an atmosphere of a school and still have all your subjects and have a family day and mass. This school tries to make an atmosphere of Christianity and gospel values and all that, but it is still a school with an atmosphere. It shouldn't be this, it should just be a school and atmosphere together.

Rita admits often to living in the tension between personal autonomy and responsibility to the information she receives from her "two or three good sources." She says

> Ultimately you need all sorts of input. You need at least 2 or 3 good people, good sources you can go to. I don't want to be told you're doing this wrong then someone else say you are doing this right ... I'm getting confused here. You need to start making decisions on your own, I guess.

Rita acknowledges gratefully that her faith community has been at work informing her from her earliest recollections. The power of the community in socialization in Rita's experience is revealed in this comment:

> A lot of people don't have the advantage of learning together with someone who is born into a religion, let's say. It is just so accidental that you are born Catholic. It is harder for people who are converted because they haven't had the advantage of having someone teach and show you, do it with you ... You've made your own errors. Then there are other people to bring you in I guess.

When asked what the community should strive to do regarding informing, Rita says,

> Well, there's so much ... not evil, but corrupt people and so many bad people that there needs to be some institution that puts out good people instead of bad people. It [the institution] can't really identify what makes them good or bad but tries to anyway.

For Danny, the community should give the road map but leave the journey to him. About his school informing him into awareness of how to live as a Christian, he says,

> It does, but it doesn't. It will teach you that it's tough out there but it's even tougher if you are a Christian. But it also gives you ways to be with them, but be with other Christians too. So you do have someone that's not always on your back so it encourages you to keep in the Christian circle not be locked up in a cage sort of thing.

The Community as Atmosphere

For Rita the community, if it is truly to be a faith community of a Christian atmosphere, should not be glued together by surface rules, systems, or structures. It should be "cooperation in the spirit." She says,

> To create an atmosphere you generate an atmosphere. You need enthusiasm for life and living. To make the atmosphere work you need a lot of vitality. To create an atmosphere you need a community, people with the same beliefs as you ... cooperation in the spirit.

The church plays an integral part in Rita's notion of atmosphere. She says,

> I think it's really good to be involved in church, not only in the ceremony, but wherever you can. You need to say you are part of the community, not only attending. Anybody who goes to church is part of the community, yes ... but an active member is what is needed. It's more than the church service itself ... that's really

> important to me too but it's more your own prayers ... like school. It should be an atmosphere, not feared, but something approachable.

Early in the school year Rita expressed concern that the new director, Sr. Marian, would not be a catalyst to her views of community:

> Well, she is new and a lot of kids are new. We don't trust her yet and she doesn't trust us and there is ... we don't really want to get to know her, and she doesn't want to get to know us. I'm not saying she doesn't ever want to get to know the students. I think the students would appreciate an outreach to get to know them.

The previous year Kerygma had had a director who had made an impact on the students. The atmosphere was one characterized by enthusiasm and the energy of Sister Catherine to get to know everyone. She was able as Rita said, "to know how your soul was." Later in the year Rita admitted that things were changing. Kerygma was becoming, in her words, "more comfortable" as Sr. Marian became more accepted and a mutuality was sensed. For Rita, the atmosphere was something fluid that was changed as the circumstances of the school changed.

For Rita, "people helping people," "caring," "enthusiasm," and "sharing" are what characterizes the times of positive atmosphere in the school community. Rita often expressed gratitude that there was at least an attempt at Kerygma towards mutuality and to "... talking with the kids and not to the kids." This atmosphere leads to an orientation, as she experienced it, to wanting to learn and opening up to a Catholic way of living.

School for Rita is most significant because it is a community where others can share and criticize in an atmosphere of love. School

means a multifaceted community for Rita but the bottom line is that the school experience should be a comfortable one:

> R. School is a place where you interact with others, you learn. People who don't go to school miss out a lot in that way as far as learning to cooperate, to accept other people's ideas and to give. School means a lot of things. Not only interaction with people your own age, it demands respect of teachers and taking criticism, giving criticism ... just basic life skills.
>
> B. So it's a small real world where you learn things that are necessary to be able to live anywhere and everywhere. Would you say that that's the main function of a school?
>
> R. Well, to learn effectively ... to learn ... well, it's an atmosphere. You have to have an atmosphere for learning ...
>
> B. What should it mean?
>
> R. It should be an atmosphere really, a comfortable place, not a place dreaded or feared as it is a lot, or a place where you go to sluff off. I don't know where the happy medium is, but there should be one. It is a special place, or it should be made that way.

For Danny, the atmosphere he experiences in his community is one characterized by an emphasis on a particular evangelical expression of Christianity. This is a Christianity that, he says, "is not pushed or overlooked." It is an orientation where one's strength and clarity in proclaiming the "word of God" is admired, and where the Bible is held to be literally true. Yet, it is a community of people who are looking for a way into synthesizing the fundamentals of bibliocentric Christianity with the emerging experience of each student. It is a community that is concerned about the student emotionally as well as academically. He says how he feels about his school:

> Well I like the fact that the teachers are willing to help you, emotionally and academically ... you don't get taught stuff like this is ape man, Utah man, or stuff like that, that kind of stuff, in the public schools. I can pretty well tell it's true here. I like the fact that there is an emphasis on Christianity in all subjects like it's not pushed and it's not overlooked ... it's mentioned so nothing is left as a subject by itself, it's tied into ... the goal of the school. I can't imagine what it is but I think it is to make Christianity a part of everything.

What he experiences in the school is an influence to behave in ways acceptable and in accordance to this bibliocentric atmosphere. However, I found that Danny lives a second life when outside the atmosphere of the school. Out of the school he behaves in accordance to the codes of those he interacts with in order to maintain their respect. There is for Danny an acknowledged "second" type of behavior that becomes appropriate. He says,

> ... when I'm by myself, when I'm away from the school, I live, let's see how do I say this, not to do things I'm obviously not supposed to do but to stay away from trying to look like I'm doing everything right and it is to try to look like I'm doing everything I'm supposed to without doing it. I want people to see me for what I am, what I will do, how far I'm willing to go ... that type of thing, up to a point. Mr Christian school guy, Mr. goody goody, that's what they think over there. I don't want them to think that I'm just there because my dad is there ...

This comment led me to ask that if his parents and teachers were not around and if he were alone here would he behave in the same way he does now. He said,

> If I was alone here it would be more of a temptation. But if I was up there in the mountains what could you do? Roll up dry grass and put it in "birchbark" up there ... I'll tell you one thing right away off the bat, people who go up there find themselves. They know what they want to have out of life and what they are. Because you make it what it is, if you want to have a boring time you make it a boring time. But here .... there's tons of stuff to tempt me.

The question I was left with was one Danny couldn't answer. "How can the community of faith inform or teach people to be truly and personally authentic, to be totally converted to Christianity? Is this conversion the goal of their Christian religious education?" Danny's principal says it is one goal, but it can only occur when the person is mature. Danny, as a seventeen year old, is looking for his way into this autonomy and maturity. It would seem the question for Christian religious educators is how to trust young people enough to get involved so that authenticity can occur, and the young person knows how to live his or her life, owning personal faith, hope, and Christian love. In other words, how can young people live consistently in and outside of the atmosphere of their Christian communities?

The Community of Models

Throughout my year with Danny and Rita one experience emerged clearly. This experience I named modelling. In discussing this experience with Danny and Rita, they agreed that modelling was the word that best names their "watching others" experience, and that their modelling is composed of looking for sensitivity, consistency, integrity, and authenticity in others. In sum, whatever part these qualities play in the lives of those in their community, the qualities are in fact what Danny and Rita are looking for. The model of others is particularly significant when it is in the form of the model's personal life-responses and ideas. This desire to see integrity was evident in this exchange with Rita:

B. What affects you most in the lives of your teachers?

R. If you teach religion in a way that is ... "shut up this is religion" or "this is my religion class" ... you are separating what you are teaching from yourself. It's hypocritical, you are making it a part of something you are a part of. All teachers at a Catholic school should be Catholic. I don't know. If a teacher here wants to bring religion into everything they do not only religion classes. All the teachers have to be fairly together with what they are bringing to the students. If you are of a certain faith or don't know how to do that then everything detracts from your messages to me.

B. One comment you made before was that "teachers don't have to be perfect ... but so much depends on the teachers and they way they live ... but nobody's perfect." What do they have to be?

R. If a teacher is teaching in a Catholic high school they have to be Catholic. I don't know how you'd distinguish a good Catholic from a bad Catholic, but I think they have to be practicing Catholics. I think they should be right. I know a Catholic pregnant single teacher in a Catholic high school. That's not very "Catholicy." I don't think that sort of thing should happen yet nobody can be perfect.

In spite of Rita's love of her church and her acknowledgement that it helps her to understand herself and her motives, she sees the church as a somewhat less than ideal model.

B. You said last time there are a lot of questions as to why things are done, some good, some bad ... and you are getting help from people for those questions. Do you dare share one of those?

R. I don't know if this is what you are looking for but just the fact of the wealth of the church and how it seems so ironic. Don't nuns take a vow of poverty, chastity and obedience? It's like poverty is right out the window. Something's wrong when the church has all this wealth and says feed the world's people and they have gold decorations. It's silly.

Part of the experience of modelling for Rita and Danny involves their peers. Many of their friends, they admit, are ultimately their worst models. The existence of negative influences from peers who were

not in agreement, with either their Christian-orientation or the goals and purposes of their faith communities, was readily admitted. Both had devised means of dealing with this tension. Danny engages in a second type of behaviour, and would pretend to be, in his words, "not goody-goody" with non-Christian friends. At times though, his conscience would overcome him. Once he slipped away to a restricted adult show and confessed how terrible he felt for days after.

Rita admits that any peer influence is balanced equally with the influence and modelling of her family. What I observed in my year at Kerygma in large measure agreed with Rita's assessment that many of the students were not modelling the typically classic Christian lifestyle and behavior as named in Kerygma's statements of goals. This fact made Rita's separation from this "other" world all the more curious to me. She says about Kerygma,

> I just think a lot of people would be shocked ... if I was to tell them that Kerygma was still people, kids who are still confused about things like peer pressure and who still succumbed to drugs and things like that. They'd be surprised ... like I was too but not in a way because I think any school would have these problems.

She chooses to act differently because, in her words, she "wants to follow God." It is also largely because of her past circumstances that she has the particular lifestyle she does. She says maybe it's because she moved at the right time to Yellowknife and out of Yellowknife. She moved before being influenced to turn to drugs and alcohol.

> When I got here, the way you are attracts a certain crowd, usually you are with those people. I don't know that probably sounds confused. But I've always had good friends.

Serving the Community

One of the most noticeable and curious differences in the communities of Danny and Rita concerns their orientation to service. Rita says that doing something for a cause in the community is important because,

> We are part of a community, we are working for a common goal. A community is a common goal. Our goal in Christianity is to help everyone we can. So working for a cause, anything we see as unjust is our goal in the community.

Rita expressed a great deal of satisfaction with her two hour a week service program in the community. In this program she has done candy-striping in a hospital, worked gleaning potatoes for a farmer who needed help, and helped in kitchens. She felt here she was expressing her Christianity practically and it "made her feel good" to know she was accomplishing something for somebody who needed it.

Danny's experience, however, is one where there seems to be a truncated sense of linkage and accountability to the community outside home, church, or school with regard to practical service:

> B. You think you should be doing more service in the community? Working with poor people?
>
> D. In the school? I don't know, other schools do stuff like that. If they want to, okay. I don't care. I'm not into stuff like that. I've done a couple of car washes and stuff like that. They should just let the kids learn and filter in the activities and that they want to. They didn't come here to have Bibles thrown at them.

Danny's sense of obligation regarding serving the community is to evangelize, which is, in his experience, verbally sharing with non-Christians the Christian gospel. In narrating his personal story back to his early school days, he highlights occasions when he had

opportunities to tell someone "the gospel" as he names it. He says his greatest Christian achievement was in grade six when he led a fellow grade six student to the Lord.

The orientation Rita and Danny have to service is consistent with the orientations of each of their communities. Kerygma is founded on the notion and vision of young people serving and working in communities to undo oppressive structures. It structures actual experiences of community service. Alliance Christian Community is oriented to evangelizing in the terms of the school's philosophical statement, where the students are equipped to bring Christ to the world. This focus translates not to service as in feeding the poor and visiting the sick, but in being able to verbally and by the example of their lives share the gospel story of salvation through Jesus Christ and share what this gospel means for an individual's life decisions.

Males and Females in the Community

Rita's loss of her father at nine years of age meant that her mother became both father and mother. This loss helped create for Rita her picture of the ideal female. She says,

> A woman who is a strong person is the ideal female. My mom is strong. I'm practically describing my mom. She's not ideal but she is very strong. One who is willing to do things, not take risks but do things. A lot of women are wimps. I'm not big on woman's lib but because it's been Mom and me over the years we've had to do things that other families haven't. A lot of women don't get out and mow the lawn. That comes from strength too, not a physical strength but mental and physical. One that understands, is empathetic and sympathetic. One that has time to spare ... and is not afraid to say "I love you" when you need to be told ... and someone who is smart. I admire that in my mom.

Yet Rita relates better to male priests and admits to difficulty in relating to the sisters at Kerygma who, she says, don't relate well to her.

Danny's position is much more extreme and throughout the year his poor concept of females tended to flavour much of our conversations and interviews. I asked him what he perceived his teachers thought of him.

> I think it differs between the males and the females. They act differently with me if you know what I mean, because the males are more understanding of boys. "Oh yeah, I used to do that too, throw a rock through a window at the old folks' home." Meanwhile the girls were sitting there combing their hair all their life so if you told them something like that they'd jump out of their socks. But they (males) are more relaxed with me, they've been through it and they know that it's mischievous. I think the male teachers who know me would say I'm a good kid, I'm not really moody. I know what I'm supposed to do, I don't always do it ... I'm talking school work. I'm not afraid to do something different, but when it comes to being a person in the classroom I'm not Mr. Quiet, I'm ... spicy? I'm sort of the guy who's not there for a couple of days it gets boring. That's what I've been told ... I pipe up with comments, I express my comments. But the female teachers don't appreciate this.

Reflecting on the Influence of Community

The communities in Danny's and Rita's experience perform uniquely significant socializational functions. The communities they belong to are clearly defined and purposeful. They transmit and preserve values unique to both of them. Their communities though are not as dialectically positive to Danny and Rita as they might be. Danny and Rita would need more autonomy and control before a positive dialectic could occur. They would need to become people who can influence their community as they, in turn, are being influenced by it. In a sense, Danny is the more powerless of the two. His community is transforming

him into his community's likeness moreso than is Rita's community. Both their communities are interpreting who each of them are. Danny, for some of his teachers, is a frustrated and confused young man. Rita, for her teachers, is a serious and reflective young girl.

The externals in Danny's and Rita's community, such as the relationships, the school activities, the symbols, and the language are all having profound interior significance. Thomas Greene calls this the marketplace experience where "... what happens ... even on ordinary days, can have great interior significance" (p. 121, 1981). Any community or marketplace experience can have a connection with the interior experience, when, as Greene suggests, it is perspective on the events in the "marketplace" that allow the connection to be made. The nature of the resultant significance is, for Greene, a "dynamic receptivity" interiorly where God can do His work in and through a person. At times during the year, the "darkness in the marketplace" experience was evident in both Danny's and Rita's experience. Whether or not sense will be made later by Danny and Rita of their frustrations, only time will tell as they begin to experience the autonomy they desire.

Gabriel Moran says we need in education a notion of a journey which is "... an interplay of bodily and social forms" (p. 165, 1983). He suggests that when the social forms of the community like family, schooling, job, and leisure embody universal values they are potentially educational. Family is a partial embodiment of community as are the other social forms of job, schooling, and leisure, that in turn embody values of knowledge, wisdom, work, and community, that

serve to lead us on in particular directions. Therefore, Rita's community, in valuing social justice and community service as it does, embodies this particular wisdom and work, and Rita is educated by it.

Erik Erikson is interested in the intergenerational dynamism in the community. One understands the individual life because of the life cycle that includes many generations and because "they can be seen as repeating, embodying and re-expressing the pattern of generations" (Erikson in Moran p. 31, 1983). Yet in both, Danny's and Rita's context, the family as community extends not beyond father and mother. Danny and Rita will be second generation Christians who in turn must re-express their learned patterns. Their parents, if history holds true, will not be physically there to reinforce their Christian choices, even though the dynamism of re-expression of patterns could be perpetuated. The extension of the family, though not physical, would continue to influence them and their children.

In an attempt to capture the potential dynamic nature of tradition in the community Mary Moore (1983) uses the word "traditioning." This word suggests both continuity and change where it is initiated by God's revelation and is transmitted and received with transforming power. She says, "The community preserves the gift (of tradition) and the witness to it, but the gift and the witness change that community" (p. 23, 1983). The community's emphasis varies between continuity and transformation. The community for Moore is the arena of experience. Experience is both a process and the result of process, the results being in the interiority where thoughts and feelings reside. The community's experience is the collective wisdom which includes

historical traditions, present experience of God and the world, and expectations for the future. In the community, then, the tradition is not static. It is rooted in the past. But in the ongoing process of passing it on and looking to the future with it present, tradition becomes traditioning.

As Moore points out, the ageless dilemma continues to concern the community's role in the transmission of the cultural tradition and the affirmation of contemporary experience. John Dewey was a major proponent of the pedagogic necessity of understanding the role that experience could play in this dilemma. Education for Dewey was a synthesis of the experience, reconstructed and informed by the past and future. The interaction was with the externals of the past and future and the inner reality where mediation and understanding occurs. The pedagogy Rita experiences in her communities of school and church intentionally strives for this integration. Rita says that the best thing her church does for her is help her understand herself and her community of faith.

John Westerhoff (1981) proposes attention to how the community educates by socialization. The community leaders which Danny interacts with, particularly in the school, are cognizant of the power of socialization. The tradition for Westerhoff, as a process of transmission of the Christian story, is lived out in a context of Christians sharing their faith. Westerhoff would call this catechesis. He understands catechesis and community this way:

> ... the process by which persons are initiated into the Christian community and its faith, revelation, and vocation; the process by which persons throughout their

> lifetimes are continually converted and nurtured, transformed and formed by and in its living tradition. (p. 1, 1981)

For Thomas Groome(a), education is a "political activity." Therefore, it is a deliberate intervention into people's lives which "attempts to influence how they live their lives in society" (p. 15, 1981). He says about community,

> To be rooted in time is to be in relationship with other people who share that time. We live out our temporarility in a historical community. If education is to address us in our temporarility, then it must address us in a historical community and attempt to influence us in the way we live out our time in community (p. 15, 1981).

Therefore for Groome(a), education is ...

> ... a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with people to our present, to the past heritage it embodies and to the future possibility it holds for the total person and community. (p. 21, 1981)

The nature of these; past, present and future, being characterized and shaped differently in Danny's "evangelical" context and Rita's "Catholic" context, mean that the very nature of the political activity of education will vary in each community. My understanding is that Alliance Christian Community is oriented to Tylerian means/end pedagogy with an emphasis on making more loving and more Christian the transmission of the evangelical faith principles to students. Kerygma is more oriented to a paradigm I would describe as interpretive, where praxis and understanding characterize the pedagogy.

CHAPTER VII

THEME THREE: GROWING

Danny's and Rita's Experience of Growing

The experience of growing through Christian religious education for Danny and Rita appears to come about through the synthesis of two realities. One reality is that which is "external," the school and home activities and circumstances which influence growth. These external realities in education have traditionally been concerned with objectivity, instrumentality, and what Dwayne Huebner (1975) calls the psychologically oriented words of learning and purpose. The other reality is internal, the interior reality of Danny and Rita.

Both realities seem dialectically and interpretively at work in Danny and Rita's experiencing of growing and they mean something very personal and unique in each of their experiences. For Danny and Rita, growing through their Christian religious education experience seems to be made up of six activities or themes. These are integrated throughout the internal and external realities of Danny and Rita. The first activity is their wanting to grow. The second is their deliberating over their experiences. The third is their coming to an understanding of their experiences. The fourth is dialoguing with others and with the data of their life to be able to make decisions. The fifth activity is their doing, and the sixth is modelling.

The experience of growing for Danny and Rita is largely "a posteriori" and praxeological. Growing occurs mainly out of their own personally developing pilgrimage. In this pilgrimage there are stages Danny and Rita seem to experience. First there is immediacy. There

is a contact and a personal involvement with the information and circumstances that have become immediate to them. Second, there is reflection to make explicit what has been implicit in this contact experience. Third, there is understanding and action. These structures of their growth experience, that which make up their experience, are what Van Manen calls "the knots in the webs' (p. 20, 1984) of growth. I will describe these knots in the web or themes in the following pages.

Wanting

The first activity or theme of growth is wanting. The wanting in Danny's and Rita's Christian religious education experience is not the desiring, preferring, or choosing kind of wanting that a child might display in a candy shop. Their wanting comes up out of exigency, out of an existential need to meet the requirements of some deep necessity. Wanting for Danny and Rita is dynamic. It pushes them to model, to desire, and to behave morally. It is the nexus to their growth. Danny, in fact, says that the emphasis in Christian religious education should be chiefly want-affirming. It should be structured to the students' wants. Christian religious education should emphasize ...

> Serving God in what you want to do. That's all there is, and this instead of teaching kids what they don't want to do.

However, Danny's experience of Christian religious education has been less oriented to this personal deciding and to wanting. Regarding his school's "relevancy" to this activity he says,

> ... if you want to be a mathematician who cares about King Arthur and the round table, you should focus on

> what you need to know and how it relates to the bible then get that straight.

The emphasis for Danny from his school experience has been on the doctrinaire objective realities of the evangelical Christian tradition and the transmitting of these realities to him. What Danny knows, or wants to know in his personal journey, has not always been brought to bear in integrating the objective realities to him. The key to unlocking the outer realities of Christian doctrine and tradition, and the growth of his interiority, is for him found in the activity of wanting. There is little agreement between his external and internal worlds. As Danny says about his school's success in transmitting the external realities that, "... it can't work unless you want it." And Danny has not always wanted it to work.

When asked, "What would make you want it to work?" he says,

> It's just basically what is right. I don't know it's right because the school says it ... I just know it. Just like if someone says drive your car on the right hand side of the road, you do it not because some old bum tells you, you do it because you were taught that and obviously you know it's the only thing to do, but you are still doing it to obey him so you are really doing it to please two people ... but it's really how you were brought up ... if you were brought up drunk and all that ... then if they told you here (school) not to do it, then you couldn't do it.

He says about this "wanting" in his life and about seminars such as Bill Gothard's (Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts, Calgary, Alberta, 1985),

> Not all of them (goals) are achieved because some don't apply to me, like marriage, booze, and the occult. He (Bill Gothard) does give enough other demonstrations and examples so that everyone has what they need but they don't have to end up being the same. You can't go away

> and say he didn't give what I wanted. It works if you want it to work, but if you go there just for something to do, it doesn't work.

When asked if seminars and conferences are good ways to educate, his comment is iconic of what is sometimes a problem between his personal growth and others' growth in his community:

> It's pretty hard because back in the school setting some people might want it ... others won't and it's sort of strange because then it's good if you want it and bad if you want it and get it and your friend doesn't or a teacher doesn't get it. It has to be all or none for a school.

Danny says about the teaching of morality principles,

> Oh, they (teachers) give plenty of examples of how it works ... for me ... if I want it to. If I want it to, it probably will. But you have to want it to work. You can't do something and do it halfheartedly, it has to be the best.

About how to begin to "want to want" his answer reflects his external focus towards a deterministic God who can override his internal wanting:

> By not doing it. Stay away from it. Ask God not to let you into a situation where you will do it ... so you just stay away.

Rita's wanting has most to do with her personal journey or pilgrimage in relation to her family. Her family is intrinsically important because her wanting points towards them. She says about the greatest influence in her life ...

> I think my family is the most important influence because I want to be as important a part of our family as our older brother who has accomplished so much in my eyes and my sister's and my mom's. It's important for me to be as respected by them as they respect each other.

The expectations of others influence Rita's life, but this appears to be more integrative with Rita's own expectations. This expectation

is reflected in her comments regarding where her wanting in growth comes from. She says,

> As far as who's best I should be a lot of people put into me ... my own expectations. I know my own capabilities and how far I have to stretch myself to grow but friends, family and church help too.

Rita wants to be respected by her family. This desire encourages her and pushes her on to growth. Almost as powerful is Rita's wanting to do what is good and right. While she could not articulate why she wanted to be good, and to do right, her comments throughout the year reflected her push towards these goals. She wants to follow Jesus because, as she said, "Jesus is good and you want to follow what is good."

Deliberating

Deliberating, for Danny and Rita, is the experience of attending to the experiences of their life, the experiences that are most relevant and that animate them. Deliberating, for them, is an encountering with "an other." It is being aware that they are aware of the other, as "a thou." It is necessary for them to investigate it, to inquire about it, to be full of wonder about it. This deliberating is the basis and the foundation of their truest insight.

Bernard Lonergan (1979) named this "being attentive" and Lonergan's theme describes their experience of deliberating closely. Lonergan suggests that the operations of the emerging of our interiority begin with deliberating or attending. The further emerging of our interiority is a revealing of distinct functions which, like our bodily organs, are amorphous and compacted in the beginning but unfold

as the natural process inherently residing in the living organism does its own work. The levels in our interiority emerge as we start to ask questions, start to be naturally curious about the "other," the objective data "outside" our lives.

Rita, in particular, asked me almost as many questions about my understandings as she answered about her understandings. Lonergan suggests that understanding emerges as we are intelligent about any encounter. Judgement emerges as clarity comes regarding the reasonableness about what the "other" is and what is the value of them, if they are worthwhile, good, and true. Judgement emerges as we become interested in editorials and issues as in Rita's case, when we begin critiquing what people are saying about such controversies as the film "Hail Mary" and about abortion. Responsibility emerges when, like the child adding her own prayers to the litany of "bless Mommy and Daddy, and help me be good," we choose to be and do the good, the true, and the valuable.

Lonergan suggests that the emerging of these levels is brought about when encouragement is given to ask the "why" question, to test and to be sceptical, to reflect about truth and falsity in "the other," and in encouragement towards responsibility and action. The "teacher" can shuffle the data into a suitable constellation so understanding leaps out. This process in the interior world is a natural process and I should not have been surprised that this was very much part of the Christian religious education experience of Danny and Rita. God chooses to work in the four levels in this invariant structure. Lonergan suggests that the dynamism at work in our interiority is

really our human spirit at work the way God created it (Lonergan, 1979).

The experience of Christian religious education for Danny, and less so for Rita, has been at times somewhat anomalous to this dynamism. The emerging of insight and ethical values through this process has not been without difficulty for both Danny and Rita. The level of deliberating, the level similar to Lonergan's being attentive, is where Rita and Danny begin to experience growth and where many of their successes and roadblocks in growing occur. Here, for example, is when Rita asks why the Catholic Church has been, as she says, "so corrupt." Here she is confronted with the best answers and deepest bias others can generate.

Rita says regarding deliberating and whose responsibility it is to change her that ...

> I think it's only up to you, I think it might be up to other people if you present this to them. That's what living is all about, collecting new ideas, encouraging new people, like a sponge taking in new ideas. I think it's a lot of the responsibility of your friends and family to share their ideas but nobody has a right to change you.

Danny says about deliberating over the right moral way of living that,

> ... basically you look at the pros and cons. You ask yourself one question ... would Jesus do this. For other things it is obvious. It says right in the Bible, don't do it.

Rita's experience is often more subjective and interior. She acts out of her understanding of the situation. Danny's experience is often more objective and external. He acts out of obedience to adult rules. His desire, though, is to be free from the expectations of others so as to act on his own understandings. Rita needs to deliberate in order to

be responsible. She knows too that she knows subjectively and interiorally:

> Oh yeah, I'm taking a risk saying this to you. Maybe a lot of people, even my friends, would frown on what I'm saying, but I think, it's what I feel about things that causes me to act.

She decides to deliberate in concrete situations and then is prepared to live with the tension that might arise:

> Mm, this might seem like I'm off topic, but you know that film Hail Mary? Well, someone got up in church with a petition and said we should sign it because the church said it is wrong. Well, that makes me kind of mad. Just because he says it's bad. I want to find out for myself, to come out with a conviction that this is the worst thing I've seen, then I'll have to support him. But I can't let someone else decide for me just because he's the head of the church ... well, not just the head of the church, that sounds a little belittling ... but things like that I have to explore for myself, like things I read.

Even though the data she deliberates over can come from a variety of sources, she is left free by her teachers to deliberate. About this freedom and the encountering of others, she says:

> Meeting a variety of people not just sticking to Catholics means you are not only going to learn about Catholics. Sticking with your youth group you are only going to have the same values. You have to reach a great variety of people.

An intellectual conversion is needed, which, Lonergan would say, allows one to see what is true in the data deliberated over. Rita's experience has made her intellectually aware of this process of deliberation and the necessity of not derouting it. Her journal entries are largely deliberations over relevant issues to her. She replies to a question about what Christian religious education might become if she had control over it:

> Well, begin as soon as they are children. Talk to children in the house about God, not just at bedtime or kneeling on the floor ... but to Jesus as a friend and not as any invisible scary magical friend but as the person in everyone. That might be hard for a child to understand but I think I might start there. In school, I'd take away things in the sciences ... well, I think everything in school has to do with God somehow. Instead of taking in English such books as Lord of the Rings or To Kill a Mockingbird, I'd take meaningful books about God ... or whatever. Mind you these have good messages. This is right or this is wrong. Big things like lying or stealing or killing, these are obviously wrong, but things where you have decide for yourself you can talk things over and find out and experience and examine what's there.

In Danny's context, his deliberations are much more strongly influenced by the Bible. As his teacher, Mrs. Neibhur, once said,

> They have to become so saturated in the word of God...so it looks to them that they have their feet solidly on Jesus. When a decision comes along they'll remember the Bible passage and will act on it.

In a sense, Rita's experience of deliberating is less bound by the Bible, though the Bible is used by her teachers. The deliberating over difficult questions does not, however, lead to a predetermined Biblical answer. The answer, though perhaps influenced by a particular Bible reference and church teaching, is also influenced by the teacher's philosophy that Rita and the other students are unique people in unique situations who can contribute to illuminating the truth. Rita's principal encourages this process in the school and the school's philosophical statement strongly affirms this (see Appendix I).

Understanding

Rita's and Danny's experience of understanding resonates close to this anecdotal experience depicted in The Original Vision by Edward Robinson:

> In general I felt that my schooling was a hindrance to the development of religious awareness. There were no teachers or classmates who ever related to the energy which caused the facts to exist; they would instruct me only with the rational facts. For this reason I much preferred books, as I could feed data into my own head at my own pace and interest, etc. I enjoyed imaginative lessons such as art, dancing or legends, stories, etc. as they seemed more relative to my feelings about the source of energy. (p. 88, 1983)

Danny and Rita say that their understandings comes from inside, as some dynamism in their interiority works to make sense of their experiences. For Rita, this dynamism is an active and robust one. She lives comfortably in the dynamism and is aware of the dynamism. She says:

> R. Basically I think we know what's right and wrong deep down somewhere inside, something tells us if that was a good action or bad action ... I guess that's where the Bible means a lot ... well of course it does, but ...
>
> B. Well what you're saying is that somehow, something has been built into you where you know already ...?
>
> R. ... or still building.

Adults, for Rita, are to be, but have not always been, sponsors of understanding, dialogically leading to understanding. She says that the best thing adults can do is to ask questions:

> R. Maybe asking questions, like the controversial issues, like Hail Mary ... and saying "what do you think?" "These are the facts and here is what I think, what others think ... what do you think." Getting me to examine my thoughts because I don't think you can learn and grow unless you have something to learn and grow from.
>
> B. So they should be a promptor, a prodder.
>
> R. Yes, someone who asks you what you think.

Understanding is never complete, never dogmatic, and has a more ultimate purpose than just itself for Rita. Rita's perspective on her

Christian religious education experience regarding understanding is interesting...

> R. I think Christian religious education has given me cause for much more thought about things you wouldn't necessarily think about if you weren't exposed to the idea and thoughts of Christians and Christianity. I think it's given me maturity, the way I can look at ... understand my faith a little bit, but it also alienates me a little bit. I think the ideas I've gained in the school and church and along with my own personal experiences with my family ... and certain things that have happened to me, have matured me. So I question things.
>
> B. How?
>
> R. Being able to accept death. I think it was hard to understand, especially if you believe in a God because why would He let it happen. You really start to question, but through your questioning you get a bigger, better, firmer faith when you finally get through the questioning and have a few answers.

The truthfulness of understanding in experience is not bound in a time or place. The following exchange points to Rita's fluidity in this process:

> B. Take this idea of experiencing a lot of things for yourself, how do you know that this is valid, your experiences are true? I've interpreted wrongly in the past.
>
> R. You sort of come to a semi-conclusion, but to keep yourself open to growth you never come to a full conclusion, you can never bend. To keep going, if you concluded and found out something more, something greater and you couldn't change, then ... I think you'll always have to look for things to keep for yourself, reaffirming, to support.

For Danny, this dynamism is something he longs for but feels he does not have yet. He understands now in a way that does not animate him in his authentic choice of a Christian lifestyle. He says about Christianity and its meaningfulness to him,

> It means something but I guess it wouldn't be as important to me now than if I was older. I'm at that age when other things are more important ... it's like people at my age are concerned about the present, what I can get now rather than what's in the future and all that holy stuff. Yes, it means something, but it doesn't mean something ... it will probably mean more to me later on.

About the influence that Christian religious education has now on his life, he says:

> I think it'll probably quit at about age 30 or 40, when you really start getting into your work. But when you are pushing 40 you won't be remembering your high school days every day ... hey, I learned that. It lays the groundwork for the job you are doing.

Danny's experience is oriented to transmission and reception of the doctrine and scripture. The purpose of learning scripture includes a hope that meaning will come "later on." The meaning is that which resides literally in the Judeo-Christian scriptures. Danny is being nurtured to know that meaning. For Danny this future orientation is problematic.

Rita's experience and coming to understand is more immediate. Yet her experience too, in its role in her growth, has had its problematic nature. This exchange indicates Rita's notion about when adults should inform:

> B. At that point should adults have told you what is right and wrong?
>
> R. It depends. Some people will always say no and others will always say yes. A lot of times what I get is that you'll have to examine that for yourself.
>
> B. How do you feel about that?
>
> R. It's impossible to decide in every area.
>
> B. Where does telling you what is right or wrong come in?

R. I don't think right now. When I was 5 or 6 then yes. But when you begin to ask your own question about what's right and wrong, well I don't know. It's hard to know when to say what's right and wrong and decide for yourself but when you begin to ask your own questions then you shouldn't just be told what is right and wrong.

B. Is there not a right and wrong?

R. To me there is ... I think.

B. Do I know what's right in every situation?

R. Well, I don't. That's why I need to ask, to have someone to go to, to ask, "is this right? ... am I doing right or wrong in doing this?" ... it's really hard to know sometimes.

Rita desires understanding about meaningful issues that are contemporary for her:

> I enjoy laughing and I enjoy a sense of humour. I like people who are concerned about the same things I am. Our religion class would be very interesting if we could talk about relevant issues. We are not really allowed to talk about ... a lot of time we branch off into subjects like this instead of learning about history, religious history. If we could just talk about issues, the things that mean something to us .... If our class was left to do that then we would be learning so much. I like that, my friends and I delving into what really are issues that concern the church.

Danny and Rita's experiences of coming to understandings involve not a neglecting of the past, but of appropriating the past in certain ways. They would like more dialogue, concreteness, and cooperation with who they are in the way the past is brought to bear on the present and the future.

Thomas Groome(a) (1981) calls for dialogue as the means of recovering the past and of deliberating more insightfully the past into the present. At the heart of dialogue Groome(a) says is "... conversation with our own biographies, with our stories and visions" (p.

189). The dialogue is for disclosure, not closure. The understanding comes from both experience and the Christian story when they are allowed to integrate. For both Rita and Danny the stress is on the Christian story, although Rita's personal interiority seems to be more affirmed. In Danny's school, the Bible is the pre-eminent story.

Paulo Freire (1979) would, at a level of dialogue, call for a decoding of reality. Groome(a), again, would call for a critical reflection on "... why we do what we do and what are our hopes in it" (p. 211). Thomas Greene (1981) has said it is a call for discernment on "recognizing what God is asking of us ... how he wishes us to respond in concrete life-situations" (p. 69). Thomas Groome(a) (1981) suggests living with the mystery of reality and admitting that we can't understand it all. Our knowing is relative. Understanding is holding up the "glass darkly" to the students through which, as St. Paul says, "Now we see through a glass darkly, ..." (I Cor. 13:12). The understanding grows out of the puzzlement of seeking to understand the mysterious. There is a certainty that is characteristic of Danny's classroom experience that is mitigating against his puzzlement and his seeking personal answers. He experiences the Bible and his teachers as the final authority and he need not look beyond.

Bernard Lonergan (1979) suggests that teachers acknowledge that understanding unfolds spontaneously and naturally. Understanding is transcendent and fundamental to gaining insight. Rita's apprehension or insight comes, I discovered, through her being aware she was journeying through her own development. She was naturally praxeological. At work dialectically with the emerging insight or

understanding within her interiority is the data of the surrounding world. Literature, catechetics, doctrines, and science collide with, and interact with, the unfolding insight. Rita often said that she sees religion in everything and wishes the school would teach more with this in mind. Conversion, Lonergan would say, is this very dynamism of insight unfolding.

This interaction of insight and the surrounding world is where the text of one's life, with its circle of knowledge, overlaps the text of the concrete experiences with their circle of knowledge. This interaction, in the idea of the hermeneutic circle, means interpretations occur in more than one arena. For example, the whole must be understood in order to understand the parts, but the parts need to be understood in order to understand the whole. This circle is unbroken and somewhat simultaneous as when Rita understands what death is in overlap with experiencing the death of her father. The understanding arrives later but still within the ever-widening two circles of understanding. Talking about both the death of her father and about death generally in non-conclusive terms has helped Rita grow in understanding.

The hermeneutical circle has another facet. The participants must understand that which is within their own circle before they can live it meaningfully. They need to understand the modus operandi of the school they attend before they can make sense of the school and fully enter into a covenant with its operation. Both Danny and Rita understand, in this sense, their school's purpose. The overlap is with the understanding in their school's circle and the understanding in the

participants' circle. Prior knowledge is needed for making sense of the situation, but making sense comes from gaining prior knowledge. Kerygma, largely, and Alliance Christian Community, less so, attempt to bring their students into a shared ownership of both the operation and understanding of the school. Students have a genuine voice at Kerygma in decision-making.

The openness and dialogue that is necessary as all participants make their pilgrimage into understanding means mutual understanding might be possible as the circles spiral up towards the appropriate overlap. This is an overlap that should not pretend to take the mystery and the unknown out and replace these with the "period," the final say on the matter. Therefore, it seemed curious that both Danny and Rita do not question that often the discussions in their religion classes were leading, not to "a discovery" in mutuality, but to what the teacher already knows. I asked Danny once if he minded this process. He said that it is a common classroom experience for him. However, now for the first time, he wondered about the authenticity of the experience. He said that while ultimately it was good to have thought about issues, the teacher should and does give the final word on proceeding.

It seems that understanding for Rita comes with the courage of the adults in her life to allow her to step into what is unknown. Her teachers hear her voice on her own terms. Her clear personality is why Rita's teachers say they know her, and are sure of her. The epistemology undergirding this way into understanding is dialectical at Kerygma. Naming what is experienced and understood is a creative act,

cooperative with a Judeo-Christian God who works through the process. What is previously understood pulls into it new meaning from other experiences. Therefore Rita continually talks about her love of dialogue on relevant issues. The conditions which seem to be operative in Rita's context are humility, love, courage, and sharing. In this way, the particular Christian religious educative experience of Rita can dialogue and lead on to a life authentically owned and journeyed. The decision-making takes place in a security that, in this life, she is loved by others and by God.

Deciding

Deciding for Danny and Rita has to do with their owned and meaningful involvement in their life direction. This is their involvement with activities such as dialoguing with and judging their experiences. The experience of deciding is really about Danny and Rita's bases for their decisions and how they actually do engage their experiences when making decisions. Danny discusses his life decisions:

> ... I don't really know. I really don't have that much discrepancy over what I usually do or shouldn't do. Like, at my point in my life I don't have the form and the government. I have basically a lifestyle cut out for me ... 9 to 3. And after that I'm not in the city so I don't really have to worry about do's and don'ts cause basically there's only about one item a year when I don't know and need advice.

Decisions for Danny are made within a pattern or form of living that is set out for him.

Rita says about friends and her life decisions,

> I have a lot of friends who aren't Catholic but ... I get other ideas from them. But I have other friends in the youth group who are Catholic and I get ideas from them too ... We share. I think I need to share ideas and

> experiences with my friends, even though they aren't Catholic and I am. Having a meeting where I can express my views and they can too, as a non-Catholic, is good. I think there should be respect.

Deciding, for both Danny and Rita, involves a process of dialogue: dialogue with self, dialogue with others, and dialogue with God. Rita follows no predetermined pattern. She will sometimes dialogue with others first, or sometimes with self or God first. Danny usually dialogues with God and others first. The dialogue with self is the most intimate for both of them. I couldn't really know what was said there in their tranquility. Yet, in their inner dialogue this year, they admitted to have been taken down to the deepest wells of their being. Rita is much more comfortable with dialoguing with self, Danny with God. Danny is conscious that he does not engage in dialogue with himself or with others particularly well. His dialogue is rarely a priori. The decisions come a posteriori as revealed in this exchange:

> B. In your own life is there anything where deciding for yourself doesn't work?
>
> D. I don't always think about it ... it's usually after the fact, sort of thing. I'll do something and I won't think anything of it and then I'll remember it and say "did I do that? Look what happened as a result?" You see it for what it is but you don't see it for what it will be.
>
> B. So in other words, a lot of what you think about what you do comes after the fact?
>
> D. It looks good now so, I'll do it. But after it happens, ... oh oh.

This type of reflection on action is Danny's natural way to come to understand. Thomas Groome(a) calls this "... a critique of the participants' stories in light of the past story" (p. 217). The

cognitive dimension is involved as the informing and revealing process occurs after and upon the experience. This link makes experience meaningful for Danny. Dewey's (1929) dialectical notion fits here as well. Dewey suggested that the organism acts according to its own structure as it impacts the surroundings, which in turn reacts on the organism. The result is experience (being that) which connects the doing and the suffering. This happens particularly with Danny. Holistic oriented notions suggest that the unfolding of decisions like Danny makes are sublative of previous deliberation and understandings. This sublation is implicit in the notions of Bernard Lonergan (1979) and Thomas Groome(a) (1981). The dialectic is implicitly at work throughout and involves community, tradition, and personal stories. This is a more reflective process, more deliberate and dialogical, and is more Rita's experience in deciding. She deliberates moreso prior to deciding. She gathers information from a variety of sources and evaluates the decision on spiritual, social, and moral bases.

Dialogue with God, that which their religious traditions name prayer, was often spoken of by both Danny and Rita. Rita's prayers were largely "thankful for life" type prayers. She would return from school at times and thank God just for her house being there. Both Danny and Rita based decisions on prayer. The comment "I prayed for it" was mentioned often. Rita, for example, just expected God to work in her life and prayed for this to continue. God was given credit for helping her forgive the nurse who apparently failed in her attempt to save her father who was dying from a heart attack. She had prayed to be able to forgive. Danny's prayers were equally as trusting, like the

child going to the daddy expecting full well to receive an answer. He prayed once for friends for his younger brother and God was given credit for the affirmative answer. His family's prayer life is deliberate and intentional, and praying comes naturally for Danny.

Dialogue with others as part of the decision-making process is the encounter most problematic for Danny and Rita. Their desire is to be understood by others, particularly adults. As Rita says "they should try to hear the song of my life and sometimes not just the words." The dilemma facing Danny and Rita in decision-making is one of autonomy and responsibility. As seventeen year olds, they are in the society-created no man's land of adolescence. Both frequently said that no one can tell them what to do. They alone have to decide. Yet they both say how necessary a certain type of "directing" input was. About the nature of this directing from his teachers regarding his decisions about Christian living, Danny says,

> They have probably showed me ... told me, exampled me, how a Christian is supposed to act. Before it was Dad, Mom, me ... people at church. Everyone at church puts on their halo anyway regardless if they are Billy Graham or not, so ... it's been 5 years here (at the school) and I'm starting to see how these people, teachers and kids act. They're bad one year and shaping up the next. I see how it works in other people's life so I can decide to try it in my life.

This exchange with Rita reveals the type of input she experiences in her decision-making:

> B. Who's responsibility is it to change you? "Nobody's." This is what you said once. Can you explain why you feel that?
>
> R. Because you're the one that has to live with it ultimately whether you don't know if it's really right or really wrong. You know mostly what it is you know. Even if it's, some of it, a little bit of a

> feeling. If you are not going to carry out the actions you decided on, you are going to have a lot of guilt and unhappiness. You are ... becoming fake.

Doing

Rita and Danny believe that they are creating their own lives. They are aware that they are at times subjects, co-creators of their personal journey with their teachers and parents. But they are also aware that the doing in the journey is not decided entirely by them. There is, they perceive in their experience of doing, an influencing and shaping by adults both before the experience of doing and in doing's aftermath. That is, there is an imposition into their doing, there are consequences arising out of their experience of doing. In both cases, it is primarily their teachers and parents who play the major role. For Danny, the adults enter in mostly at the consequence stage. That is, his experience is one of doing what he wants then receiving the consequences from his teachers or parents. Rita's experience of doing and imposition by adults is different. The imposition is before the doing and is characterized by shared expectations and praise. These exchanges with Danny and Rita illustrate the difference:

> B. How should someone help you with those areas you are good in, standing still in, or backsliding in?
>
> D. Say you had a problem ... just an example say you were a klepto. Your teacher couldn't convince you not to do it. And it wouldn't and couldn't be your parents either ... they could convince you more that it wasn't right, but the person who has to make their mind up, decide not to do it, is <u>you</u>. No one can stop you from doing anything unless they take something away that (physically) stops you.

With Rita, one form of adult imposition is a type of praise:

> B. How about good behaviour? How can the school help you know what's good?
>
> R. Well, by doing the same as you are taught when you are little, not reward but you are told "good girl" and just ... being told this once in a while ... offering a few words of praise.

Rita has other adults who, in a less manipulative way, perhaps are able to positively assist her doing. They do so by knowing her and sharing expectations.

> B. When you say "the best you can be," whose best is that? ... how is that determined?
>
> R. Being the best I can be is stretching myself to the limit or farther than I have been before. If I did something good I want to do it better. As far as who's best, a lot of people put into me my own expectations. I know my own capabilities and how far I have to stretch myself to grow and friends and family and church help too.
>
> B. How do they do that? ... how do they put into you?
>
> R. They know what I can do as well and they encourage me to be the best I can be.

For Rita any worthwhile doing comes from mutual loving and accepting, and helping people do that which is worthwhile and in agreement with "gifts":

> B. If you were in charge of the whole process in all of the world, how would you help people <u>do</u> this ... what programs, what ways to help people love and accept ...?
>
> R. By encouraging people to use gifts ... to develop their own gifts and from there help develop others' gifts. That would be the basis of self love ... then it would be easier to love other people.

Danny associates much of his Christianity with doing. Throughout the year his responses to my questions about the nature of his

[redacted]anity, his level of Christianity, or what Christianity means, were "doing" oriented. His phrases were "staying away from," "behaving properly," "practising being a Christian," and "not getting carried away."

B. Danny, what is your present level of Christianity?

D. Well, uh, I'm not really excellent and I'm not for sure bad. It's just that I read the Bible, pray and quote, do all the Christian stuff and I don't get into drugs or anything like that. I try to stay away from things like that, though sometimes I do get persuaded, and I'll go and do a thing with my friends. So, I'm still your average mischievious kid. I'm not really unchristian in my actions if you know what I mean.

B. So, in other words, you are committed to Christianity, but are normal? Is this the word you would use?

D. Yes, I don't try to play hifi Christian good guy, if you know what I mean.

The school's influence in Danny's doing is interesting:

B. Is this school helping you become a better person?

D. It's helping me become a lot of things but it doesn't help me become a better person. It doesn't teach me how to like other people because everyone is fitted in here anywhere, not like the public school where you have to <u>earn them</u> to like you. It's not that here we are all Christians and it's buddy this and buddy that. It's there, if you want to be their pal you had better do it right. Here not so much. Here it probably doesn't help me. It does help me probably though in being more patient ... because if I get impatient and lose my temper, I have something else to contend with, the principal. It's more strict ... it kind of helps me be more ... well, I don't know if it helps me be more diligent with work kind of. Everyone says be more diligent at work ... you really have to ... the environment helps a bit here because you want to be like everyone else and do your work.

When asked what should the school's role be in his "doing" of his Christianity, he said:

By ... not encouraging me not to do elsewise, and by helping me if I have questions. Just being there, sort of an advisor, not an advisor, but just advising when they want them to.

Danny's desire for an authenticity in his "doing" came through many times. This comment points this out:

B. What do you feel is the most important thing for you to do in school?

D. ... it's to try my best in all my subjects and get the best grades I can.

B. What would be number 2?

D. The second most important is ... ... being a normal person, being not like Mr. Rowdy or Mr. Quiet ... but being the way you're supposed to be in a school situation ....

Christianity, for Danny it would seem, is the development of habitual patterns of living that meet external criteria:

B. My question is <u>how</u> does that happen, that is becoming a better Christian?

D. I don't know ... as long as you become a Christian all you have to do is practice and slowly you get better. You can't just, ... well you can become a Christian overnight, but in a way you can't. It takes time to get away from certain things. If you are a boozebreath you don't quit in one day. Like it takes time. You practice and slowly but surely you get on the right path and pretty soon you are clean and just stay that way and you don't go back.

<u>Modelling</u>

B. Do your teachers teach you Christian principles? Can they teach you anything at all?

R. Oh yeah, you learn from every available source you have.

B. What do they teach you?

R. They teach me a lot about myself ....

Rita's experience of modelling leads to a delivery of herself to herself. The encounters she experiences in her relationships and the heroes and heroines in Rita's life lure Rita, not to themselves but back down into herself. They do so unintentionally, largely because Rita has chosen for this to be the way it is. It is Rita who deliberates over their data, the "words and songs" of their lives as she names it, and understands, chooses, and acts on these. She naturally looks for specific qualities and behaviours of her models to model. Modelling is a redemptive experience in Rita's life.

For example, her mother's opinion is respected and acted on. She wishes to be respected by her sisters and brother, and she is. They offer their life experiences to her as treasure chests for insight. She digs in, sees, and admires. She says,

> I learn from admiration really. You look at what they're doing and it looks good to you and you say, "I'd really like to be like that;" a wanting, a desire, to be like them ... like my sister-in-law, my family.

The reflections Rita sees are lives she admires. Her models are transparent; she sees through them to qualities and behaviours. Models are not, in Rita's experience, impositional, manipulative, or authoritarian. The models in her life are understandable to her world, she can understand them while they allow her to create her own journey in her own way. For Rita, models represent the true state of affairs. She easily catches their values and apprehends, in practical sense, what they have.

> B. What is faith for you?
>
> R. The questions are getting harder. Faith is love and trust ... (it comes) from family ... when every Sunday comes and you know it's church day and Sunday

> School. It comes from what you learn in school, and family and prayer. It becomes a part of you. Faith is pure. This is what I want.

Rita talks about her sister-in-law, she says,

> She has qualities I don't have that are very appealing to me. If I can be like her I can make more of her qualities my qualities.
>
> ... I get a real spiritual feeling from her. She's really kind. I can learn a lot from her.

About a favourite priest she says,

> Priests have a lot to do with it. I heard ... have you heard Fr. _____? He speaks at our parish sometimes. I heard him speak last year on sexuality ... and it was such a good talk. He didn't use a lot of language that no one understood. He didn't put himself up and people down. He just spoke to the people. He was really interesting ... I got a lot out of that ...

Rita looks to males as models. She readily admits that the loss of her father when she was nine is a factor in her predisposition towards males as models. She sees that,

> Teachers have been models. Well, I've always looked up to a few teachers. They were males, and I had just lost my dad and I was really looking for someone like that to look up to.

Love is at the heart of any modelling that is influential. She says "friends have a lot to do with modelling too," but they need first to love themselves. She says,

> I think it's hard to see, to recognize good in themselves, to say, "I am good" and give themselves a great big compliment. If you can't do this for yourself then you can't or don't want to see this in other people either. I'm not sure about that. Why can't people love each other? A lot of jealousy, I guess.

This type of modelling that Rita experiences has grounded her into stability and concreteness both existentially and practically. Both

nature itself, and her investment into the security and peace of her family, serve as models. She says,

> I think just the fact that every day has its new kind of challenge. It's like you don't know if you are going to live every day. I wake up in the morning and say, "thank you." I did that one day and it felt so good to say thank you, you know? And I think one day it felt good to see my house there, still standing, no harm had come to it, I've come to look at things, not take them for granted but trust that God will continue to be and do ... So it's just past experiences ... it sounds confusing.

The identity of Danny's positive models has remained unclear. The discussions over the year, instead, were consistently about the negative modelling of the female teachers in the school and the negative influence of non-Christian friends. About two female teachers in the school he said,

> Mrs. Neibhur and Mrs. Joyce dislike me and my family. Last year they were always, repeat always, on top of me and never friendly or understanding.

About the female teachers in the school he said,

> They do not understand how males are because 90% of our female teachers are single and do not know what a growing boy acts like. They think that all boys are macho womanbusters.

Danny talks also about teachers "pushing" the Bible and God. He says,

> ... my favourite teachers talk about God when the subject is open but they don't push it. I've been asked "Aren't you sick of having the Bible crammed down your throat?" I feel that is true with some of these teachers, not all. Their goal is to convert everyone and teach everyone a new doctrine everyday. If they would only let the students become and just steer them along here and there to keep them straight.

Danny's friends present modelling dilemmas. He says,

> I guess it is hard in some situations to act like a Christian when you are with your non-Christian friends though. I hope I can do what the preacher said to do when I get older and am more courageous.

Danny talked about the guest speakers who have visited his school. For Danny there have been two types of speakers, one he can admire and model and the other he cannot. The type he cannot model are what he calls "old, fat evangelists with white shoes who haven't been a kid for centuries." The type he can model "are ex-motorcycle guys who have killed someone, have scars, and have become Christians."

Making Sense of the Experience of Growing

Growing for Danny means something vastly different than what growing means for his teachers and parents. In the statement found in Appendix H, Educational Philosophy of Alliance Christian Academy, there are lists of objectives that the school seeks to achieve for the spiritual and moral growth of the student, for the student's personal and social development, for the student's academic success, and for work within the home. These statements are oriented from the top down to the student. That is, they are written from the point of view of what the school seeks and not what the student seeks. They are statements written, not from the student's perspective, or for students, but for information to prospective parents, teachers, and students interested in Alliance Christian Academy.

The most curious aspects of the objectives were that Danny could only guess at what they were and that, in his words, whatever they were "they are drowned out by the teachers." The curriculum as lived (that is, the relationships, the dynamics, and the procedures of the classroom) all create a different reality for Danny. This reality is one not always of growth in the objectives but, for a great amount of the time, a reality of frustration, of perceived inacceptance by

teachers, of irrelevant curriculum, and of alienation. The questions I had here are: "What happened in the experience of Danny to result in this lived reality?" and "Is this negative experiencing going to characterize Danny's life for a long period of time?"

There are two ways I could choose to try to make sense of Danny's, and Rita's experience of growing. One way is by reflecting on the relationship of knowledge and experience. For example, if there is no experience prior to knowledge, then the experience of Danny and Rita can best be illuminated by the immediate knowledge of what is happening. That is why Danny can be experiencing frustration but a classmate is not. A second way to make sense of their experience is by reflecting on a different relationship between knowledge and experience. In this case the knowledge of what is happening comes later in the form of awareness or understanding. The experience occurs first and meaning arrives later. This might come in dialogue, reflection on scriptures, or in any number of dialogically pedagogical ways. This too is why Danny, or Rita for that matter, might end up valuing their present experiences differently as time goes on and circumstances change. These experiences may be from external circumstances. For example, when Jesus appeared to the disciples <u>after</u> his resurrection, then they knew immediately what He had meant months before when He had spoken about rising from the dead (John 2:22). They also knew exactly what His death and resurrection meant. They interpreted His death and resurrection by the scriptures, and interpreted scriptures by His death and resurrection. Danny's frustrations may one day mean something different and more positive than they mean now.

Or, there may be internal circumstances in Danny and Rita that change. These circumstances may include the intellectual, moral, and religious conversion that Bernard Lonergan (1979) names, the horizon shift that modifies experiences and transforms them in fact so there are actually new eyes seeing the experience resulting in new meaning. The internal circumstance is usually dialectically and hermeneutically related to the external circumstances, if there exists a pedagogy that deliberately attends to both. Only in the language used, the affirming of interiority, and the type of reflection encouraged, can both interior and exterior worlds inform, transform, and be appropriated into each other.

I have outlined two ways of understanding experiences that help me make sense of Danny's and Rita's experience of growth. I wish to examine more closely four related ways that experiences and meaning are related in Danny's and Rita's experience of growing. The first way is looking at experiences and meaning as immediate and active. Experience is, as Gerald O'Collins says, "to be alive when something happens" (p. 35, 1981). Here the meanings in experiences are first known. — The second way that experiences and meaning are related is through recollection. O'Collins says that experience,

> recollected in tranquility or non-tranquility, years later they may betray this meaning for the first time. (p. 35, 1981)

If we accept the first way, then Danny, in particular, should not "technically" experience frustration. He should know, based on cultural, religious, sociological, and developmental reasons, what is happening to him and what this means. This way assumes a maturity and

a knowledge base that his teachers require, as well as a dynamism for the meaning-making that results in Danny happy and growing into his school's goals for him. This is not happening. Danny and his school teachers admit there is only a little growth in Danny in this school year.

If we accept the second way, then all experiences are potentially pedagogical. If in mutuality, love, careful deliberation, and shared puzzlement the teachers and students can identify their actions, identify motivations and reasons, and clarify experiences with other shared stories, then Danny may not have to experience long lasting frustration. Whatever frustration does exist is more in Danny's interior as the meaning-making and growth occur, creating tantalizing tensions. For now Danny is frustrated in his Christian religious experience of growing.

Danny says this about moral living ...

> ... basically you look at the pros and cons. You ask yourself, "Would Jesus do this?" If it says right in the Bible don't do it.

Rita says about moral living ...

> ... I think it's only up to you ... (you) collect new ideas, encounter new people, take in new ideas like a sponge ... but nobody has a right to change you.

These comments reflect how they deliberate over the experiences of their lives. They iconically show Rita's interior orientation and Danny's external orientation to experiences. Making personal interior meaning is much more possible and evident with Rita. Her knowing is dialectically relational with her external experiences. The distance and separation between Rita and the reality "outside" is ultimately no

distance or separation at all. Rita's experience is her becoming one with the resultant meaning. I attribute this to the freedom that Rita experiences in her home and school that is genuinely praxeological. The pedagogy at Kerygma sponsors student reflection about their action and action in their reflection.

Danny's school pedagogy is oriented to the external realities and to transmission. As Danny's teacher, Mrs. Neibhur says,

> They have become so saturated in the word of God ... so it looks to them that they have their feet solidly on Jesus.

The hope is implicitly that the interior dynamism, Danny's personal understanding and valuing, will already be in line with the Bible or will soon come to be so. The assumption is that there is truth inherent in the Bible that is universal, transcendable, and able to do the work of transforming interior lives. It can mean something true now to those who hear it but will most likely mean something later on. Danny feels that he has to accept someone else's meaning in the meantime.

In short, Rita is being sponsored towards growth interiorally, through the natural process of the unfolding of her interior levels leading to Christian action. Danny is being encouraged towards growth in the observable externalities such as "doing what he's supposed to do."

A third way of trying to understand Danny's and Rita's experience is through an examination of how the nature of the person is perceived in each pedagogical context. In Danny's context, the educational philosophy is designed to undergird a curriculum leading the student to

decision, to developing the mind of Christ in the student, to imparting understanding, and to developing a desire to know and obey God's principles (Appendix H). The prevailing notions in this and other discourse systems in the school reveal what Habermas names an empirical and analytical curricular position. The orientation is ends from means. Therefore, efficiency and control are required if persons are to succeed. The encounters of people with people are geared towards achieving purposes and towards learning, particularly Biblical learning. In the reality of Danny's experiences, he is confined within the school's objectives for him; he is perceived as not being successful by his teacher, Mrs. Neibhur, in achieving these objectives.

A fourth way of understanding Danny's and Rita's experience is through an examination of some theory of curriculum and the relationship of this theory to the curriculum as lived in Kerygma and Alliance Christian Academy. Curriculum theory had its beginnings following the prevailing paradigmatic notion of the human person. Bobbit and Charters were among the first 20th century "curricularists" to see in the child a learner as a functional adult; robotic-like and able to be manipulated to more efficient skill performance. The time-space principles used in technology in the 1920s were translated to curriculum work. Knowledge meant skill from training and growth meant improved technique. The social milieu was characterized by mobilization of the workforce, industrialization, and social Darwinism. The teacher was the master performer, the model to be emulated. One of the basic tenets of curriculum making is Bobbit's "How to Make a Curriculum":

> Education is primarily for adult life, not for child life. Its fundamental responsibility is to prepare for the fifty years of adulthood, not for the twenty years of childhood and youth (1924, p. 8).

Inherent in this rationalization are assumptions about the predictability, control-ability, the authenticity of the child, and ultimately what growth means.

Dewey in My Pedagogic Creed reacted to this. He conceptualized education as a process of living and not a preparation for living (1929, p. 292). This debate has not ended. There are at least three curricular positions that have grown out of curricular thinking according to Habermas (1968). The most salient and common in most schools is the empirical/analytical type from which the Tylerian curriculum position is evident. This is the means/end orientation and is paradigmatic largely of Alliance Christian Academy and much less so of Kerygma. Here, instrumentalism and objectivism are operative activities. Curriculum projects at Alliance Christian Academy are technically oriented and stress goals, purposes, and written integration of scripture into packaged curriculum materials.

The second curricular position is the interpretive/hermeneutical one. The reconceptualists in curriculum theory today, such as William Pinar, James B. MacDonald, and Henry Giroux, are attempting to better understand the very nature of the educational experience, and in a more phenomenalogistic sense do, as William Pinar says,

> ... concern themselves with the internal and existential experience of the public world. They tend to study, not "change in behavior" or "decision making in the classroom" but matters of temporarility, transcendence, consciousness and politics (p. xi, 1975).

This interpretative orientation is not entirely the position of Kerygma but it is evident in at least the philosophical statements of the school and in some encounters I observed. These encounters were largely not intended to produce change, enhance teacher power or control, or even to identify new knowledge. The actions were rather, what the director at Kerygma names, Christian love. Christian love comes, she says, through life's meanings being witnessed in the classroom in loving ways.

The third position is the one taken by the critical theorists who maintain that all other positions continue to promote false consciousness and an unequal distribution of possibilities. These theorists say there must be more than interest in the existential or phenomenological person. There must be interest and change evident in people's economic, social and political systems. Kerygma is moving towards a critical position. It has yet to make the change at the symbolic level. It is trying to make the change "out there" in the "marketplace" (Greene, 1981) through activity. Its leaders might note that the critical theorists would say,

> ... the process of socialization takes place within structures of linguistic intersubjectivity: it determines an organization of behavior tied to norms requiring justification and to interpretation systems that secure identity (Habermas in Groome(a) p. 130, 139; 1981).

Both Danny and Rita explain their world differently. Their explanations, Huebner (1975) would say, are vehicles by which values are shaped and actions legitimized. Both of their pedagogic situations legitimatize the existing symbolic system.

CHAPTER VIII

THEME FOUR: MEANING

There are seven activities which, for Danny and Rita, make up their theme of meaning. They are: 1) meaning-making, 2) their meanings of Christianity, 3) Christian religious education, 4) the meaning of life, 5) school, 6) teachers, and 7) church.

Meaning-Making

Danny makes meaning first and foremost by "being there." He says,

> The biggest way to learn is to be there, even if you don't understand it. If you are there enough you'll understand it.

Once "there," Danny has his way of making meaning that is reflective of his particular evangelical or, as his father often named it, "Biblio-centric" Christian experience.

> B. How do you know if the <u>how</u> to do something is right or wrong?
>
> D. You look in the Bible and if someone there has done it you can obviously tell that, if they're in the Bible their credibility is right and God must think they're doing something right. It's just basically out of what you know. You come to know how to do things right and how not to do things the wrong way.

Danny's way of making sense of the externalities of his Christianity, or making meaning of his experiences, was usually the same way of his teachers or parents. Danny's experience was one of accepting the meaning teachers named. His meaning-making experience was not one where he felt he had a past to contribute in the pedagogic process in his Bible classes. The result of this dissonance came clearer as the year went on, particularly when Danny was disciplined

for breaking the rules in the classroom and at a Bill Gothard seminar. Danny seemed confused at these times about what his life meant and whose meaning he indeed had.

B. How do you know why certain behaviors are bad?

D. Because people tell me they are and give me certain examples: "if you do this look at what happens."

B. Is there anything you just know yourself or is it all that someone has told you?

D. I can't really say because I've always been told. I can't say ... there are some things where common sense tells you, Christian or not ....

B. How can the school help you know, other students know why certain behaviors are good or bad?

D. Because I guess they tell you. They can't do anything else ... they're not superhuman.

This exchange pushed me to want to know whose meaning Danny possesses, what was its nature, and what, if anything, was he making meaning of for himself.

B. What is the <u>one</u> thing you are learning?

D. I'd say, ... well, ... I can't say I've learned anything. I've gone to church all my life and my dad is a pastor and I've heard all the sermons. I've learned a couple of new principles but not anything major!

B. What could the school have done to help you learn something major?

D. Explain it a little more. When we went to Bill Gothard, well when you are a teenager it sounds like he is just knocking, just tearing everything down, ripping you apart and not giving you anything to build on to your good. I can see it from an adult perspective, the preacher, but it's like he is tearing you apart. We had little positive in that seminar.

What animated my probing now even more was that Danny was revealing to me that somewhere in his interiority he did know how to

make meaning, and therefore was potentially able to make his own meaning, whether this meaning was acceptable to his teachers or not. It also became clear that these were at different levels of conscious articulation. Danny admitted that with me he was talking about his life and what his life meant for the first time. The puzzle to me was that he knew and could make his own meaning. But time and time again our conversations trailed off to where Danny confessed to performing according to how he perceived other people were perceiving him and not according to his own meanings and understandings. There was a lack of autonomy in Danny's life.

B. How do you know a thing is bad?

D. Mmm ... Plato here, a philosopher.

B. Well, I told you these questions are going to get tougher and tougher.

D. The obvious one is you don't have to say it. You know it's wrong and things that are right to someone and wrong to you ... mmm ... I don't know (pause) .... Well, if it hurts anyone it is obviously wrong. That's quite obvious. If it brings any reputation of anything lower than what people thought, or if it takes something away from someone that could have made them better, then it's wrong. But if you don't really know then I guess it's up to ... how people treat you for doing it. Not really the consequences, then you'd know it's wrong but it's just how people look at you ... "oh, oh, I shouldn't have done that, I guess that was really dumb."

I asked him what motivated him to be good. He said "That to a point, it is to please your parents and, to a point, to avoid punishment." He added that what he wants to do is to know for himself and then do what "pleases me" and agrees with the way I should be going. In pursuit of the nature of Danny's meaning, I asked him once what sharing his faith means to him and how he came to have this meaning:

D. First teachers should do this by acting it out. Not telling us, not giving us a piece of paper, like a play or something. You should see it, hear it, in a situation that might happen. You don't want to talk about something that will never happen, or something that is easy, straightforward that might happen ... or probably happens every day in North America. You just want to see how it works out and what to do. It's better to see and hear something than just see it ....

B. How have you learned to share your faith? Is that how you've learned to be a Christian?

D. No, that's just an idea. I've just learned from what I've been told, I guess ... examples, seeing people doing it. I've been there when my dad did it ... I guess I've seen it happen.

For Danny making meaning comes easiest when the concrete is made available to him, when the explanation is followed by concrete examples that are consolidating. This led me to consider whether the notion of "learning styles" was relevant in this case and that perhaps Danny's frustration was a result of the teaching styles of his teachers not matching his learning style. From one school year, and hundreds of hours of sharing, I felt Danny could not simply and conveniently be slotted into a learning style category such as concrete experiential. I was not satisfied with this because Danny was telling me something deeper. He was telling me about how he makes meaning, or at least tries to make meaning for himself. This was evident as I asked him regularly, "What is Christian religious education to you?" His answers always reflected the tension between his wanting a personal answer and the receiving answer that was being presented to him. He says,

> You shouldn't learn to know the proper sequence. This is for English and other subjects. Christian religious education is different. If you are going to learn Bible, it should be on what you think about and what it means to

> you. What good is it to memorize and not know what it means? Instead though, here you are graded on what you can say.
>
> It doesn't do me any good now ... they say it will help me later but I forget it all. They should teach what it means now by showing you, not forcing you, then explain it and give examples and then I can read a book about it. They integrate Christianity into social studies. That's good but pushing Bible all the time. I don't like this. When the teachers present they present it authoritatively like "this is the way you should live." People get turned off to that. With the Bible, I have already a clue so why should they push it?
>
> Bill Gothard is another example. The novelty of discussing his seminars wore off after a month. The teachers then get onto us and not so subtly, and this got a lot of people angry. After Gothard ... they should have taken a class and explained and have the students explain what they've learned, what was new - not teach a class in the old way but drop the teacher-student thing and have a conference.

The teachers, Danny says, often interpreted for him and the other students the meaning and purpose of school seminars and Bible passages. This was the school pedagogy as Danny experienced it. For Danny, the teachers knew the purposes of seminars, Bible passages, and school activities, but he and the other students all too often did not. As a result, there were no interpretive threads linking Danny's pedagogic experiences. The pedagogic experiences in his Bible classes and in seminars were not harmonious with Danny's way of meaning-making. The information was, in his experience, external to him and rarely was there even a deliberate attempt at synthesis with his interior world. As a result, he was not being enabled for personal meaning-making. Yet, he continued to say that he wants help in synthesizing Bible principles with his experience, and in trying to understand how he in fact understands. For Danny, this synthesis is a pedagogy he desires.

> Teachers need to help me but go slow because you'll burn out. Go slowly, you learn by experience and trial and error. You've got to get onto the right path and slowly work your way up ... step by step. You get stronger as you go on ... teachers need to explain this. Instead they say "Look at them, they are so good etc." but their expectations were high and the kids were not interested and were worn out.
>
> All the female teachers never come down and be on your level, as the males do. The females who come from larger families tend to be more understanding of why you do things, and they listen to you. Single teachers should not teach grade 12.

For Rita many of the same frustrations of meaning-making were evident. However, she says that regarding meaning-making the Bible is a secondary source to other people's input.

> I don't really rely on the Bible too much. I don't know if I am not a good Christian or whatever but I get more out of people talking about things and reading, not necessarily the Bible, but the Bible too. But to me the Bible is filled with a lot of just rhyme, the parables, and it's hard to interpret them and that's, I guess, the major division in all the churches. I don't know if I agree. I can understand how people can get so many different meanings out of one passage.

Christianity

At the beginning of the year I wanted to know what Christianity meant for Danny and Rita. Also, I wanted to see if their meaning of Christianity would change over the year. If so, one question I might answer might be "was this a result of my interaction?" Would what Paul Willis (1980) calls reflexivity occur and both my participants and I change? Or would their meaning of Christianity remain constant, and would it be clearly articulate in their lives?" Would their Christianity also animate their lives? As it turned out their meanings of Christianity did change throughout the year as did mine.

For Danny, Christianity means a blend of experiences very much characterized by something he does. It means staying away from things he might do that are wrong, becoming a Christian by the "born again" experience, keeping on the straight path, and a curious mixture of living in the assurance of the truths of the Bible and fearing "backsliding." Backsliding for him, is engagement in unchristian activities. He says Christianity to him means ...

> Well, I don't want to backslide so I'm afraid of getting back and back and if anything ever happens ... this will sound really dumb, but I'm afraid that if I backslide and seeing it's near the end ... the "old dictator" (Satan) comes up and it's mark time, I might just be a fool and take the mark. So, I want to keep up the way I am and learn to stick up for what I believe even if it's small or big so I get practice, not letting down what I believe is right.

As the year progressed, Danny's ability to express more clearly what his Christianity means to him grew. His statements reflected a shift of emphasis from doing right and avoiding wrong to accepting the doctrines and principles of his Christianity. Finally, by the end of the school year, his meaning of Christianity largely emphasized concern with avoidance of certain influences and backsliding. It seemed these shifts came at times when the emphasis in both the school and Danny's home were changing. Perhaps our interaction influenced these changes too.

At the beginning of the year Danny found himself in a set of circumstances which meant he had to resolve some unresolved past conflicts. He apologized for comments concerning the appearance of another student and the year started off in a bright way. In October, the grade eleven students attended a Bill Gothard seminar in Calgary.

Bill Gothard offers a seminar series called "Basic Youth Conflicts" and this is designed to be particularly instructional as well as motivational for teenagers regarding their lives, their adolescent problems, and general Christian principles for living. This is Danny's perception of Bill Gothard:

> B. How did the Bill Gothard seminar educate you?
>
> D. I guess it broadened my view as to why things were right and what to stay away from, that kind of thing. It didn't really tell me to do something. It just told me how to stay away from something or correct something that's already been done. If you just do that you won't do it again whatever it was. He gave you steps on how to break habits.

From this time until the beginning of February, Danny seemed to be more settled and cogently articulate about the meaning of his Christianity. It was almost as if his knowing what not to do provided security. In the third phase, beginning in February, I saw what appeared to me to be a major reversal and a de-settling in Danny. It was in this phase however that our conversations became more intimate and honest, with Danny's frustrations concerning the school and his female teacher surfacing.

Finally, one March afternoon, he decided to reveal explicitly what I had suspected he would eventually have to reveal. The school was not reaching him. He was very unhappy, and Christian religious education for him was, "something that's okay for now but not when I get out of here and am into my life's work." It was at this time that his journal entries began to express deep and dark feelings. I felt it was only a matter of time before he would reveal this because he had been implicitly saying it for five months, and we had now developed a deeper

level of trust. It seemed that Danny's father and I too were being more open and respectful with each other, and I sensed a carry-over into Danny's and my relationship. This is a journal entry for March 10:

> This is going to wreck your whole study, but I had to write it. I'm not mad at anything or anyone so this is all from a calm mind. I just decided to tell you what I think of Alliance and some of its teachers and principles. I have found Alliance to be a good school academically. I can find no fault in any of the teachers when it comes to teaching abilities. I found however that since the middle of grade 10 (last year, Dec. 84, Jan. 85) that I found out more about what is really going on at Alliance. I have walked in the staffroom and heard gossiping about other teachers and students. I have heard teachers call people names that are extremely derogatory. I have heard a teacher tell students to "quit their bitching." I have heard one teacher lie last year about my best friend, just because he did not like him. The teacher did apologize but nevertheless that is wrong!
>
> Two teachers _____ and _____ dislike me and my family. Last year they both were always, repeat always, on top of me and were never friendly or understanding. They reprimanded me and my best friend in October and told us that we were insensitive, hard-heartened, vile and said that both of our families had no feelings. I have disliked Mrs. _____ more than ever since then; and so has my whole family. Next term I get English from a different teacher than _____ who I had before (Eng 10) and I can guarantee in June I will have done better than in Grade 10 simply because I will like class.
>
> I feel that Alliance women teachers are too "hi-fi" about the Bible and God. They push the Bible on you at almost every opportunity. They also do not understand how males are, because 90% of our female teachers are single and do not know what a growing boy acts like. They think that all boys are "macho womenbusters," they can't let us be loud and rowdy in the least. They want us to be like the girls.
>
> The male teachers know what it's like to be rowdy and prankish. They are my favorite teachers, they talk about God when the subject is open, but they don't push it.

> Many new students said to me and other people "How can you stand them making you feel like dirt for just a little thing you did wrong? Aren't you sick of having the Bible crammed down your throat?" For people who arrive in Alliance and have not gotten used to it, this is a problem.

> Christian Religious Education is more than merely an education, it is a teaching of academic etc, and spiritual things which a growing Christian must know. The teacher of CRE must be willing to be more than a teacher; they must be willing to be a model too. They must give you the academic information but also tie in scripture when needed (do not over-use scripture in class, it turns the students off). A teacher must understand how a student feels about not only his school subjects, but also for how he feels about God. A teacher must deal with their class at different levels in order to accommodate those who know nothing of the Bible, and those who know a lot about the Bible.

> I'm beginning to hate a lot of things about Alliance. The teachers are acting so dumb half the time. My teachers gave me trouble for almost having a fight with some jerk. The teachers didn't even listen to me, they just gave me a DT and gave me some dumb essay assignment. I hate school. No one ever listens to me because I'm a rowdy person.

Danny answered the question, "What does Christianity mean to you?" in these four interviews. Each set of statements reflect the changes Danny was experiencing, yet common themes of frustration, confusion and desire for autonomy and legitimation colour all statements.

October 2

> It's something you are but it's something you do also (pause). Once you are a Christian, you change, you know what's right, you know what's wrong ... so you change. Everyone knows how you become a Christian so I won't go into that .... You revert your ways to what's good and so in a sense you are changing what you are. So it's what you are but it's also what you do because you are doing the things you didn't do before. Really it's what you are ... but as a result it's what I do ... a non-Christian sees what you do. So, one influences the other.

December 12

> Well, it means the way you act ... not the way you act but when you do something, it usually refers to something you cannot do the opposite of ... so if Christianity is something you do, you are sort of following your breviary like a priest. You're following your book and going on your straight path sort of thing and it is not cut out for you but you know what you are not supposed to do that don't go over here. You are in the do path. Now, something you are, that's when there are no people saying "Don't do this, don't do that" ... it's just you. If you step over there no one will say "Get back on your path" sort of thing ... it's like a little kid and train tracks. The kid listens to his mom. So the something you are is something you will be ... it's a standard you set for yourself.

February 10

> It means that I can't do all the stuff I want to do or have wanted to do ... and it means you know where you are going. You are not going to be reincarnated as a fish in some other galaxy or something like that. You basically know what life is all about so you know basically what's going on to a degree in the other dimension.

April 7

> It's a lifestyle, not a religion because religion has rules; "You got to do this" and things that don't make any sense, "don't do this and don't drink coffee." This, you can do basically whatever you want. It's really up to you how far you are, your advancement as a Christian. If you are starting out people don't expect you to be old Billy Graham. They expect you to do some bad things but to want to change. But if you've been one twenty years you should be advanced and it should be your own pace. Work at your own pace.
>
> B. What is one word that describes Christianity?
>
> D. Does it have to be a religious word? I guess lifestyle and freedom.

Rita's Christianity means a mosaic of "being the best you can be," "doing Christian acts," "appreciating what there is at your fingertips", and "where you help others become all they can become."

Rita continued to find the question, "What does Christianity mean for you?" problematic all year.

In October she was unable, much to her own amazement, to articulate what Christianity means for her. What amazed her was that she had felt she knew what Christianity is and that she was living as a Christian. She was attending a Christian school and yet she had never really grappled with so fundamental a question. She said,

October 5

> Christianity ... I'd have to look at everything ... the church plus the way you act ... isn't that Christianity? I don't even know the dictionary meaning of Christianity. So Christianity is acting Christian towards others I guess. I guess I'm not too clear, eh?

October 19

> Christianity ... that's a hard question. I'd show them how much there was at their fingertips sort of thing, to enjoy and do the things they could and the causes they could stand up for. I'd show them both sides of issues and ... I don't know ... what's the difference between these religions and our Christianity ... I'm sure it's basically the same ... all I could see missing is their chance to make a choice for themselves.

I attempted to limit my sharing of my meaning of Christianity as I wanted to uncover, as with Danny, if and how her meaning would change and what external experiences outside ours would influence that change. I saw that Rita's meaning seemed most affected by the atmosphere of the school. Throughout the year her comments referred to helping people and to loving people, activities which the school stressed.

November 19

> To be a Christian is to go to church and not walk by someone and not say "Hi" in the hallways. It's going back to see if you can do something for that person. It is being open, understanding, and compassionate to other people.

March 1

B. What does it mean to be a Christian?

R. It means to be the best you can be, to stretch yourself beyond what you think you can do as far as being Christian. It means a lot of patience and self-discipline and I want to put a lot into it to get a lot out of being a Christian.

B. What's different between being a Christian and not being a Christian?

R. Christian acts I think. When I think of being a Christian I think of people helping, caring for others in a Christian community. Just a lot of helping and caring love. Not to say that people who are not Christians don't love ... but being a Christian is characterized by love.

April 2

To me ... when I think of it ... I don't know of all the implications of what I believe in. God, as far as Jesus was God, and everyone believes this and this is fine. But I think Christianity is a way of living where you help others become as much as they can be while also building your own abilities. Act in a pleasing way to God.

Rita's emphasis on Christianity as a "doing" activity within her particular way of being remained constant throughout the year:

April 26

B. So it's more of what you do for other people. Is there anything about Christianity that has to do with "what you are?" Does any of [Christianity] have to do with what you are?

R. ... a lot of family comes into Christianity too ... how you put into your practise what you've learned from your school and your family and from the church, all combined.

B. You keep saying what you do ... what you put into practise. You are saying to me, "It's a doing thing, an active thing." So if I was to use the word love, that would be an action word, it wouldn't be something inside of you, just sitting there.

> R. I think if you act out of love or if you act out love it means more than if you sit there ... it means more than a proven statement ... you need both but if it was, I almost think it is more worthwhile to [act].

For Rita, Christianity means less the Christian doctrines or orientation to the Bible than it does moral and loving living. It's a way of living that comes about through relating with people with love and concern, and relating with God in gratitude. She says,

> I don't really look back too much and say I've broken one of the ten commandments ... I guess they are not really important to me. I don't know if that is sacreligious to say, it's just that any sin is a sin and I don't think one is worse than ... another. There are a lot of things that you can do wrong that are not included. These are just as bad, well not just as bad as stealing ... but they are equally important for me ... a sin is a sin is a sin. ... to me moral and spiritual is the same thing.

Christian Religious Education

What Danny actually experiences as Christian religious education has never been quite what he has wanted or has hoped the experience would be. It was near December when I first began to see that the questions I had been asking Danny about his Christian religious education experience were forcing him to give an idealized "hoped for" answer for his Christian religious education experience. I began to understand the notion of the priority of the question. It was here, about the beginning of December, that I knew I had to go through Danny's level of responses and interact with him more deeply in order to uncover what, in essence, was his experience of Christian religious education. Here are some of Danny's initial responses regarding Christian religious education. His earliest responses were oriented to "how to":

October 2

D. It is teaching about God's principles, how to live God's principles, how to get out of something and back into God's ways. It is how to pray, how to effectively minister to other people in what you want to do or just out of what you don't do. It's when a situation crops up and then how to live the Christian life and do it willingly and not grudgingly. It is doing everything as unto the Lord.

B. You mentioned a lot of "hows."

D. It's how to do something, more than the actually do something. If you are told something you automatically won't do it.

November 5

B. Have you thought any more about my question "What is Christian religious education?"

D. Yes, I guess you can't really think about ... it's quite obvious what it is ... if you've been there ... if you've been in a Christian school and live it every day. It is not something you describe. You can describe it but you need to see it. Like the normal teacher in a public school will teach you what the curriculum is, but a Christian religious education teacher will too but will branch out and show you how God ties into it sort of thing. But they won't do it all the time ... pushy, pushy. But with Christian religious education you have to know that it is by how people treat you and other people during the learning process. They tell you what to do, they teach you what you are supposed to be taught ... but they care about you.

B. If you were the boss of Christian religious education what might it become?

D. It becomes something that works - all the time - not all the time but most of the time. It's something where the teachers open insights open to the mind. It shouldn't be something that's slapped on ... it should be something that instead of going fast and bouncing off you should go slow and penetrates. It shouldn't be ... okay turn to Lev. 3. But slowly and surely. They teach you the basic stories. They let you go at your own pace ... like "you don't know what Romans 7 is? Shame on you." They should just go at your own pace in Bible class.

I began in December to see an experience where both a transmissive orientation and instrumentality were operative. Yet Danny was not, primarily because of my questions and our partial level of trust, at the time able to reveal what in fact characterizes his experience. Danny here seemed to be sending at least two messages. One message was what he expected I wanted to hear. It was a message of what he felt is supposed to be happening to him. This message concerned a Christian education experience external to him, one that only with his cooperation could he enter into the sense of it. He says,

> Education is in a box and people are around it. Christian religious education has this too but has God at center. Society's education is good enough for society but the other dimension is God and they don't have this. Therefore, we are led to a study of the world so as to know why, from God's view, things are here and work the way they do. For example, why does chemistry exist, why do trees exist, why the Bible is there and what its purpose is. It is analyzing everything from this perspective, God's perspective. They (Christian religious educators) cooperate with God.

For Danny's teachers what was intended to happen in Danny's life was, in fact, a horizontal shift, where a conversion experience should occur, transforming his consciousness to a world view that represents Christianity. Danny was supposed to take much of the responsibility for this. The school was to inform, motivate, and give examples toward this experience. But, in fact, what happens was what Danny finally revealed to me in February.

> What happens here is not as wide as I've described. It's up and down a lot, sometimes it is and sometimes it isn't. It really has a lot to do with how it's presented to us. It is basically an education that teaches about the Lord. It is something that is told to me ... theories, examples ... they say all this stuff and I believe it, but when it comes down to the school it is drowned out by teachers. From a high school student's

> view it is good to know but it is pushed a bit. You have a Bible course but it is pushy. Bible memory is good but we have to learn it perfectly.

This difference between the curriculum as intended and the curriculum as experienced never changed significantly during the year for Danny. I asked him how the experience of Christian religious education could be made more meaningful for him, less pushy, and more amenable to what he would prefer.

> Other than explaining? Well, ... having other people explain. They've done that, too. There's been three or four guys here in the past. There's been your average evangelical old man with white shoes that no one listens to. But they got a couple of murderers, Hell's Angels guys that have been stabbed seventeen times. Those guys, well if you don't want to listen to them then get out. They point you right out and embarrass you. Those are good ones! They really explain it so it is not just an experience in our school ... it's happening down in Texas ... it's not just in here ... so we know it's not just a little doctrine floating around Alliance Covenant Community.

Explaining means showing the patterns of experience, the substructure, and background. For Danny it means stepping outside the school and the Bible as presented, and into a lived experience shared by someone who has credibility. It seemed that for Danny, Christian religious education should be a forum for representing more clearly the larger phenomena of Christianity through the lived experiences of others he respects.

The experience of Christian religious education has sponsored in Danny a particular type of synthesis of the external doctrinal aspects of Christianity with his interiority. He experiences Christianity and Christian religious education as something external, experiences that are objective. Rather than being life itself as his evangelical

situation would desire, Christianity is seen as merely a way of life for Danny, and Christian religious education is the process for teaching about this way. About the modus operandi of specific lifestyle Christian religious education can have, Danny says,

> It can touch all my perception on how to teach, how to learn, how to respect authority. It won't affect me on what I do in my own free time. It will affect me in what I do, ... in what I know has to do, with school. It will affect me when someone treats me bad ... it will jolt my memory. If it is presented as having nothing to do with academics then it wouldn't, unless you really thought about it, show what was right or wrong.

The experience of Christian religious education then is largely anecdotal for Danny. Rather than animating his existence and becoming a positive part of his consciousness, it is an experience showing Danny the "places not to go." It remains an experience where others, his teachers and parents, are the subjects and the doers. He partakes in their reality naming as an object and a receiver, learning to cope and bide his time until the experience is over and autonomy is his.

Rita, on the other hand, seemed to experience two phases during the school year which were reflected in how she perceived Christian religious education. The first phase was shorter, from October to the end of November. It was associated with what Rita was experiencing in her religion class. She said (October 6),

> Well, a lot of what we hear of religion is fact, fact, fact ... I think it should be more of examining of things, of questioning the possibilities, of the things we might have.

This fact-oriented religion class was only one particular aspect of Christian religious education for Rita:

> I always seem to come up with the idea that Christian religious education is an attitude, more so, it's not so much something you can teach with facts or by rules. It's more something you learn by an atmosphere ... by living it rather than teaching about it.

The second phase of Rita's experience began in December. At this time Rita became increasingly vocal about the discrepancies between the purposes and atmosphere of Kerygma and the way the students were living. Rita now seemed to accept the limitations of Kerygma, as she perceived them, to cause radical conversions and shifts in student's consciousness and habits. She became more accepting of the pedagogy of her class and looked for her own ways to make meaning. She said,

December 12

> Christian religious education means to reach kids in the way they should behave, ... in a loving attitude all the time, in every aspect of their life. Not just at school, then leave it at school, but to take it with them and treat other people courteously and take it home and take it back to school next day. And practice it at the parties they go to ... because I don't think anyone wants you to stop teenagers having parties or anything like that. It's just their ideas behind what they do at parties or whatever. The goal would be to convince them of this, to apply to everyone in such a way that they could feel they could act that way all the time.

I would characterize her second phase as being more patient, where she suspended judgements and began looking more earnestly for her own insight through her own process of coming to understanding:

February 19

> I think Christian religious education is a lot of love ... a lot of discussion, delving deeper into what we perceive our faith to be and questioning each other and ourselves. Along with the struggle that goes along with that, I think it should be coming to answers and conclusions.

April 2

R. It's helping me discover. Well not right away but through talks and communicating with friends and family and whoever to start to think about things. Maybe not consciously; but, when things come up more fully regarding a real question about what you believe, you take all that what you've stored in your memory and put it to use.

B. So in other words, people are sort of a mirror to you.

R. I think so, in a way, not an entire reflection.

Her idealized notion of Christian religious education meant she often had difficulty in expressing concretely what it might be. I asked her once how she would explain her Christian religious education to someone:

April 2

I think I'd bring them some place ... you can't really explain it ... maybe not here but perhaps a film because you know, it would be different. If I could show a picture, everybody smiling, everybody doing something for somebody else, everybody doing something for a cause ... umm ... people just doing and enjoying something then this would show what I mean by Christian religious education.

The Meaning of Life

D. This world is going to have wars, inflations, taxes, electricity bills, insurance. Everything all adds up, things break down. Kids that, clothes this, house that, style that ... money, money, money and everything goes to pot. That's all it does. I just want to be healthy, no chemical foods.

B. Would you consider yourself a little pessimistic?

D. Yup, I don't even think I'll live until I'm 25.

B. What makes you think that?

D. I think the world's going to end.

For Danny the world doesn't present itself as a hopeful place. He has neither a hopeful vision for the world nor for his life as part of this world. He wants to live in the mountains and there "find himself."

During the past year Danny has revealed how life continually seemed to impose itself upon him. It was always something and someone pushing back against him. It had been this way for as long as Danny could remember. He admitted he could not flow with this life. He consciously and deliberately chooses to live as sort of a rebel, particularly in the school. In this rebellion, he was often seeking the authenticity of acting in accordance with how he felt, not with what others were deciding his behavior should be.

> I hate being good ... it's just like you are a priest, a bishop, a pope or something. I hate to be one of those guys. Always it's the same thing. Religious this and religious that. You can't do anything, you can't play football because you might hurt somebody. You can't do this because it riles up the class. Act how you feel you can act, be yourself. Everyone has their own personality. Sure some people are quiet. Other people just want to liven things up kind of thing.

When I asked him how anyone might help him live now as he wants, he said,

> ... I have no idea ... no clue ... that's probably dumb for your notes.

Danny continued to be uncomfortable and unsure throughout the year in talking about what his life meant to him. Rita however seemed to be much more comfortable and reflectively introspective. She once thanked me for choosing her to be a part of this research because she had been searching for a reason to become more purposefully reflective about who she was and what her life meant. Early in the year I asked her who we

would find if we unwrapped the layers that surround her. She enjoyed this type of questioning. She answered,

> A lot of insecurities, fears, doubts, umm ... I don't know if there is anything right at my core ... I'm happy, I think. I think my purpose in life is to help others in any way I can. Basically, it is to be happy and to enjoy life.

Life for Rita was meant to be enjoyed. This never seemed to mean a hedonistic or narcissistic "enjoyment." It was the enjoyment that flowed out of who she experiences herself as, a redeemed person loved by God. She did not have to, if she didn't want to, do any more than just in gratitude enjoy life, her home, and her family. For Rita this was at the very heart of what it meant to be a Christian. She was to enjoy life. If she was not enjoying life, or was not happy, I could sense this immediately. She had a face that revealed like glass what was inside. In these times she was always most unsure of her faith, of whether she was a good Christian or not.

Life for Rita meant something quite straightforward; it was not complicated and no one was, in a pedagogic way, forcing any other consciousness or way of being on her. She was free to be who she was becoming and told me often that she was aware and thankful of this "freedom." Therefore, she could say quite unaffectedly that when she feels good, God must feel good.

> Well, it just seems to me ... I get more out of just thinking God loves me. God would shine His pleasure on me just as much on me being, though, as just doing. I know God feels good because I feel good about what I've done. If I do something really nice for someone, I think that that must be more important than ... I can't think of an example ... perhaps going to church ... or having to pray at such and such an hour ... or believe such and such. There are things I don't believe about the

> Catholic Church but I would always be a Catholic because the basic beliefs of the Catholic Church are the ones I accept.

Rita's Christianity is not for the church. The church is for her more so than she is for the church. However she gives to her church her time in her youth group and regularly attends Mass. Her life as a Christian means living in a particular way that is characterized more by doing good for people than going to church or reading the Bible for example:

> I think it's more a way, like you said, a way of living ... like doing good things for people. It is more important to me than reading a chapter of the Bible every night. I think people get too caught up in the stupid little, picky little laws ... do you know what I mean?

I asked what qualities she admires in other people, since people generally seemed more meaningful and influential in her life as a Christian than did church or the Bible.

> I think a lot of patience; you know that's something I have very little of. I like someone who is dedicated and determined, has something to follow and will stick to that, not unquestioningly, but will explore other possibilities. That's what I can't stand, someone who looks "this way" only and won't even give in to the possibility of another alternative. Someone who knows what they want but will question.

School

For Danny and Rita a Christian school should be more than a school. It is a place where meaningful and helpful relationships are nurtured, where an atmosphere of love is pre-eminent. It is where the whole student is cared about and where Christian principles are taught. Danny says,

> It's a school ... well not necessarily a school ... that sounds like just a learning place. Let's call it an institution ... that sounds like a jail ... but you know what I mean. So it's where all the staff mingles with the students ... where all the staff, board, and so on are Christians. They know what the Bible is, they know what the purpose of life is and they care about other people. Their main concern is their students and how their students feel. They are willing to change their students whether it's emotionally, spiritually, academically. They'll be willing to change what's wrong with him ... or at least tell him. They'll try to make the kids understand, not tell them what to do or not to do .... They are your teachers but your friends in a way.

For Danny, school means some place where people are willing and able to be with students. It means a place where teachers embody scriptural principles. They have a purpose which includes a willingness to change their students. Change is a legitimized characteristic of the teacher's pedagogy and the school's purpose in Danny's experience. Change, in Danny's meaning of school, comes largely from what is planned as curriculum in the school. What the planned curriculum means, and what the lived curriculum means, are different for Danny:

> B. What is the goal of the school?
>
> D. Probably to ... I know it's a verse ... they'd say to uplift the Lord, to teach the children about the Lord and good academics ... and to teach what's right and wrong. That's probably not what it is but I'm close. For sure they tell you how to act, what to write, and how to be.

For Rita, the meaning of school comes largely from experiencing the curriculum as lived. Since she has more ownership in the curriculum than Danny, her meaning of school and the school goals are quite close:

R. Here, people are not afraid to say "I love you ... you are a good person" ... people are quicker too ... it is a school with a difference but it isn't as big a difference as people would like it to be. There's always room for improvement. It's a good school ... the atmosphere here and the atmosphere at my old school are definitely different.

B. So you feel a difference here?

R. Well, I can't really compare because I left a lot of my old friends at the old school. I just haven't found a lot of the same friends here ... maybe that's not my fault or anyone else's fault ... it's just a different crowd. If they were here it would be all the better here. Yes, there is a difference. People are all the more willing to be understanding and to care about you.

Rita often commented that the school needs a greater time allotment towards specific atmosphere-building activities. She suggested greater time be given to home room group sharing of laughter and ideas. Rita said throughout the year that she wanted Kerygma to be a school with a difference and to be a place of spiritual nurturing through all subjects in the curriculum. She talked of Kerygma as "her school" and always had an idea for "improvements." She was realistic in her expectations and was not trusting that the school would solve all her problems.

B. Do you think a school could make good people?

R. It can help ... it's not an assembly line, but you can foster an atmosphere and an attitude.

B. What can the school realistically do for anybody?

R. Give you a better outlook on things ... optimism versus pessimism. Making you more aware of God and your ability to turn to Him when things are rough.

B. What can it not do?

R. It can't make everyone ... well Sr. Joan ... I hate to use names ... but she said that the retreat last year wasn't a meaningful experience for a lot of people. Well, I'd like a moving experience too but you can't expect it every morning in fifteen minutes every morning, to be spiritually moved by God. You can't expect great turnovers in a day or in homeroom or by a simple passage in the gospels. It takes time.

Generally, the greatest limitation of schools for Rita is that they are not able, by their nature and physical limitations, to help students spiritually in being a community of discipleship:

R. I think schools anyway are insensitive to the kids no matter what kind of school it is. I mean, school is a problem for all kids whether it is marks or assignments due. So I mean the academic part is always an opposing force. As far as the teachers, there are some people here who are able to come off their teacher level and talk with you one on one and help you more that way than in a normal high school. I don't think in a large part schools can help you overcome a lot of problems.

B. Why can't they?

R. Because they just don't know enough about you. There are so many things that happen just overnight to a person that they can't begin to know how you are feeling. I'm very moody myself and feel like kicking someone one moment and laughing the next.

This comment seemed to be consistent with Rita's comfort with and allegiance to her family, and with a desire for mutuality through her predisposition to want to learn for herself.

I need a lot of information. Still, I don't want to feel guilty about saying yes, when it might be no. I don't feel good when Mom says I should and I don't want to, but just out of guilt I give way to her ... I just want to come to my own conclusions. I want people to care about me but care enough not to let me go my own way. If I was going to make a terrible mistake like joining a cult, then I'd want someone to stop me, not trial and error because that kind of error is deadly. But I think I should have some independence.

Teachers

For Danny, teachers mean guides, overseers, and information givers:

> D. The teachers tell me what to do at school, how to act and what to write, but not what to think. They can suggest me to do something, but they can't say "you do this." In the end they don't have the final say, I do, but they see the consequences in the end ... so they are my overseers here. Basically my parents tell me what to do because they know me and they suggest to me what to avoid and how to act, etiquette, etc. But they don't really tell me to do anything unless it's chores. In a sense ... no one really tells people to do anything unless they want it for themselves or for you because they like you or are concerned about you ... It's hard to understand isn't it?
>
> B. What about your parents, how do you like the way ... see the way they <u>give</u>?
>
> D. They sacrifice their life, their priorities, so you can have a good life.
>
> B. Which of the two would be more of a model?
>
> D. Ooh ... by far the parents, the teachers don't care what you do. Well, they do here but ... it's like they don't have authority after school. You can do what you want. Sip a martini down there and they can't blink an eye. But here if you even mention the stuff, well. They have authority in certain places, so they can't really be your leader or overseer, so your parents always are, from 1 to 92 years of age, for your whole life.

Danny thinks teachers should also mean authenticity in having lived the life they talk about.

> They should be a guide. Someone here, well some are like overseers, they expect too much. They have to understand your personality and base their expectations on your personality. Because they don't have any kids, so they are used to acting their own way all the time at their home. They make their own decisions, they don't understand. The people with kids understand kids ... You'll notice that there are a lot of teachers who are not married so they usually get what they want, so if

> they get something you don't like here, they just ... hoooof [blow up] ... They need to know what a family is before they have a 30 member family.

Danny wants the teachers to allow the students freedom to "be what they [students] want instead of trying to mold into what the teachers want."

Church

In Danny's words church is for "explaining what the whole thing is all about." Therefore, he trusts "their interpretations of life" and does not need to understand so much as to accept what the church says. The church, though, means something not immediately relevant or important.

> You need to understand church just so you can understand if it's right or not, like, you have to get the right church ... not some Mormon church. But you don't need to know the in-depth spiritual things. That's what they do there [at school], you wouldn't need to go if you did.

The Catholic historical tradition might have meant for Rita a more pervasive and personal meaning of church. However, Rita sees her church as too ornate, too wrong historically, and not intrinsically related to what Christianity means. Christianity for Rita means day-to-day living in gratitude and in helping people:

> People say if you don't go to church on Sunday that's number one sin. Well I don't believe that. I have a couple of friends who consider themselves Catholic and they don't go to church. I listen to Father Alberto. He says that people who say they can just pray at home are not good Catholics because you aren't coming to God to show Him how much you love Him. It's just too ornate. If you are a good person ... then, let's say Catholic, ... Christian means a good person and striving to do all you can for Jesus and the God you believe in ... but doesn't believe that Jesus was born in this certain town then that's fine. Little terms decide what determines what the faith is.

I asked her in January what is one experience she had which confused her this year. The church was the focus of her answer:

> When we were taking social studies and taking just how corrupt the church used to be ... and how they used to cheat everyone and were so vile and underhanded. This makes me look at it and still now with all the wealth it has, and think that all that the church tells me is propaganda. We are not told about the whole story. It makes me wonder ... there are still a lot of abuses in the church that I didn't see before, that maybe I would challenge a little bit more now. One thing I mentioned with Sr. Joan was the inability of the nuns to celebrate the Eucharist without the presence of a priest there.

Circles of Understanding: Interpretation

Danny and Rita, in their experience of Christian religious education, have assimilated and accommodated a complex array of external "Christian" experiences. These experiences are within, and make up a larger experience, the experience of Christian religious education. The assimilating and accommodation of experiences within the overall intentional experience of Christian religious education has given them the hermeneutic key with which they make interpretations of future experiences in their lives and, in particular, in Christian religious education. They share in the common human experience of meaning-making based on who they have become, of what they are making meaning of, and the relationship between these two.

The basis of their meaning-making, their way of interpretation, is their own horizon of understanding. This horizon has been created through their culture, teachers, church, their process of Christian religious education, other communities of understanding, and from their own developmental stages. They have developed, as a result, presuppositions. As the researcher, in attempting to understand this

meaning-making process, I have tried to describe and unpack their presuppositions so as to in turn share in and describe the meanings they have about the themes mentioned above. I therefore engaged, in a way, in a hermeneutical act with Danny's and Rita's experiences in the describing and interpreting of their interpretations of certain themes. This process was a mutual retrieval and describing of their experiences of these themes.

Danny and Rita engage in hermeneutical acts daily. Regardless of the intention of their teachers or parents and the stated purposes of Christian religious education, particular interpretations have occurred and meaning has been made of the lived aspects of their experience. These meanings included their personal Christianity, their Christian religious education, their school, their teachers, and their church. These themes comprise the theme of meaning which was so integrally a part of Danny's and Rita's experience as I understood it.

Both have their own understanding and lived experience with these themes or texts. The relationship between the interpreter and the text is meaning. As the researcher, I have entered into their meaning with lightly-held preunderstandings for the text that I was interpreting. For in questioning them about their meaning of church and Christian religious education and so on, I was being led further into the larger meaning of their Christian religious education experience. At the very same time this dialectical process was occurring with Danny and Rita, for they began the year with partial understandings, and fuzzy, poorly articulated understandings of each theme. My questioning drew out of them more insight regarding each theme which provided the context for

further and deeper meaning-making regarding each theme. This process was natural since I was literally the research instrument describing, analyzing, and interpreting.

It was in awareness that this would happen and was happening that I used different questioning strategies. One strategy was to re-ask the same questions throughout the year. A second was to transcribe, analyze, and attempt an initial thematization of interviews so these very exchanges would generate the next set of questions. In this way I hoped to unpack and see presupposition behind their meanings as well as to describe their meanings. A third strategy was to build enough trust so that the conversations and interviews at times would just go where Danny and Rita wanted. My preunderstandings and horizons of meanings here were most challenged. In order for genuine dialogue to occur I had to "let go of," more often then hold on to, what I understood.

A final way of analysis of Danny's experience regarding meaning is suggested by the data of Danny's story. The work of Jurgen Habermas (1968) helps analyze meaning. Habermas' critiques use methodologies in the social sciences which serve instrumental interests, as they do in the natural sciences where appropriate methodologies are for confronting and mastering nature. A word Habermas uses often is "interests," which means the specific natural and "human" impulses for all of "man's" goals. In human communication or exchanges at an intersubjective level that are intended or perceived to be happening, as in Danny's situation for example, people affect each other by their meaning. Habermas says we need a methodology to see whether meanings are being processed accurately, where interests in a hermeneutical

further and deeper meaning-making regarding each theme. This process was natural since I was literally the research instrument describing, analyzing, and interpreting.

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sense enable accurate interpretation. It was obvious to me that this intended intersubjectivity was particularly blocked in Danny's situation with his teachers.

Habermas suggests reasons for this happening. He asks implicitly, "what if there is internal corruption in people which distances man's interests in intersubjectivity? What if the very content of what is shared is not towards interests in fellowship?" Habermas suggests, regarding interpretation, that such distortion is systematic. Therefore, a hermeneutic methodology is needed for reflection, on both personal meanings and back onto itself. This methodology needs self-reflection. Interpretation needs praxis, not techne, to detect in the flow of exchanges and events distortions in its "victims."

This correction is found in Habermas' critique of positivism that renders technical the human and the hermeneutical. The correction is also found in the critique of any methodology that takes the subject away from a position internal to an experience, away from an internal position in the hermeneutical circle. Depth is needed in sharing meanings that philology or science cannot get to.

The significance of Habermas' thoughts for Danny's situation is that they are inroads into understanding Danny's cry for emancipation in the absence of critique, praxis, or communication. Habermas' thoughts have provided to me another lens with which to make sense of Danny's situation.

CHAPTER IX

THEME FIVE: GOD

Every student in a private Christian school is acquainted with God. God is mentioned in prayers, in doctrinal and school philosophy statements, and in classrooms. Through the very existence of the school there is a message sent to the students about God. Parents and teachers also send messages that portray God or some abstraction of God. However, the picture of God that resulted in the decoding of these messages was uniquely different for Danny than for Rita. Two questions at least arose from this research regarding Danny's and Rita's experience of God. What is the relationship between these messages sent by adults and the God-image formed? What is the relationship between the image formed and the lived experiences in student behavior and relationships with God?

God is pictured by Danny as someone "who could zap you if He doesn't like you" and as "someone who is in heaven and looks after all the things on earth." God is definitely far off and powerful. The messages Danny seems to be hearing about God result in a picture of a transcendent God, far off yet ready to be "there when you want and He'll try to get you back on track." Danny's experience of God is like his experience with his teachers and parents. God is there to help when needed, but should not be there all the time telling one what to do. He experiences God as less cooperative and harmonious with his interior world than he desires. God turns out to be a gentleman (Danny's God is masculine), and non-incarnate for Danny.

D. I see God as someone who is in heaven. He looks after all the things on earth. He puts all things right in the Christian life. He doesn't manipulate them, but if they ask for it He'll help them and if they don't He'll sit back and He'll remind you and send things along the way to get you back on the path, if you go astray. As for me to Him, He's basically the counsellor. He's not there all the time, like a teacher, "do this, do that ... and if you don't get it done you're in trouble." He's not your parents where they don't tell you to do that but they are constantly looking at you expecting you to do it on your own. He's just there. If you want it, He'll do it and if you want Him to make you do it, He'll do it. But if you don't want him to He won't. I'm just the person who comes in and asks or doesn't ask.

B. It's like God is there as dad, you can go in and ask Him, but He's not there all the time hovering over you?

D. He's there when you want to, and He'll try to get you back on track, but He won't pester you.

Danny's God is important to his being good in a curiously inverse way. The relationship means that when Danny is good, no God is required. When life is not going well Danny can "conversationally" ask God for help. If God doesn't help, the negative effects accumulate and Danny must devise his own way out of the problem.

B. Does God control your life?

D. Sometimes He does, sometimes He doesn't. It's more like up to me. If I want Him to ... it's not like He tells me, like I tell Him type of thing. Other times I get reading my Bible again and get in my little routine and everything will be fine and I won't do anything bad and I'll live just as I am supposed to. It just depends ... it just depends on the situation I am in. But if I'm just by myself ... school, church, not where there are temptations so I'll be good, I'll resist it. If you do something wrong you'll say, oh well, that's really dumb, so you can't really start to pray now. So you go do something else and before you know it, you're just as bad as Jim Jones.

God is rational, coolly aligning events on earth according to the circumstances there, but only with the invitation of people. Danny's general frustrations mean either God will have to do something drastic or Danny will. For Danny, his drastic solution is always expressed as an escape to find himself. For God, the drastic action is in coming back to earth in the form of Jesus. Danny is unclear about what happens then. That Danny's Jesus is Danny's God too was not explained by Danny. Danny used the terms "Lord", "Jesus", "He", and "God" interchangeably.

> D. I think Jesus is going to return in 1993. I'm not making a prediction but ... I think it's about that time. I heard someone say it's about the generation after Israel and that's precisely 1993. And if you take the 7 year tribulation that takes it to year 2000 A.D. and the end. The Millenium isn't until the year 3000 and there is a significance somewhere to the year 3000, not the year 3000, but the number. In Revelation, I can't remember where it is. That's basically what I think. I can't see myself living until I'm 25. It doesn't bug me at all. If I saw myself living till 18, 19 I'd quit school. I wouldn't go out ... I'd start shaping up my act, getting ready for the big day.
>
> B. What would you change?
>
> D. I'd get my act together, quit this school and take a youth missionary course. I'd go quickly to preach up North.

God is pictured by Rita as someone who "gives me so much," has happiness as the purpose for humankind, and is someone who "... is a friend, someone you can really love." The picture Rita has of God is masculine and reveals a being who can be both immanent and transcendent. God is "always there," close, and with you. Yet God can move into someone's life and cause changes in a person's attitudes. Rita's God worked inside her, not in her external circumstances. The

externals, as far as Rita is concerned, were already taken care of by God. For example, life is a blessing from God and her main job as a Christian is to appreciatively live it.

Rita experiences God as someone in whom belief is reasonable. She enjoys making meaning of God and the world because this is one activity we are supposed to do. Her purpose is, as is everyone's purpose, to be grateful, find meanings and purposes, and ask God for forgiveness after sinning.

B. How would you describe, or what is the nature of your relationship with God?

R. Well, He gives me so much, and I say thanks, maybe not as much as I should. But I'm kind of a giver and kind of a receiver.

B. What does He give you?

R. Everything. Just look outside. And family and nature. I guess, I don't know, if we spend time together, but I guess we do, every day. I talk to Him. At night, I pray. A giver and taker I guess.

B. What does God want us to give Him?

R. I'm sure God created man with a purpose in mind. I guess that man has sort of stumbled over this over the years. I don't know, our happiness? I guess if we are happy with what He gives us ... then that happiness is something He'll enjoy.

Rita's experience of God is not so much to know Him but is in living properly within His purposes:

B. What leads you now to continue to believe in God?

R. I guess it is faith. Why do I continue to believe in God? A lot of it is faith. It's just that it's kind of a purpose God is and heaven is a purpose. You work towards just those purposes.

I don't know, especially when I was younger I used to ask my friends and they couldn't really tell me ... how do we know there's a God? Well, we know because

they've read about it. But how do they know ... And you don't know ... everybody has to believe in something just to be at peace with yourself.

B. But why Jesus and not Buddha?

R. I think it's the same thing. No, I don't know. But I think everyone is worshipping the same God only in different forms. I don't know. It would be interesting to go to all the different religions.

God's purpose in one event of her life was to forgive a nurse who had been slow in aiding her dying father. The knowledge of how to act comes from the faith and history of Rita's family. The good feeling after acting properly testifies that God is pleased.

B. What, in the past, can you recognize as having influenced you to have believed in God?

R. My family's own faith has a lot to do with it. I've had ... well, not a lot but a couple of incidents where God too had me. Well, God touches you every day ... but I've had a few incidents.

B. Could you describe any?

R. Well, I handed in a paper today and she wanted to know when God's healing power had touched me. I can tell you that. I was nine when my dad died and ... when that happened it was a great big loss. I don't know if age had anything to do with it though. I immediately looked for someone to blame. I blamed the nurse for going slowly. We had confession here at the school and I asked God to absolve me. I realized it was a sin. I felt so calm after that. I don't know what it means but I know what I felt. It was real calm, a real peace.

Rita experiences God emotionally and experimentally. Therefore, God is someone with whom "talking" comes easily:

People have to feel comfortable ... I mean to make God a friend, someone you really can love. You really can't have Him way up there ... I meant, He is but, you can't talk to Him that way. You have to be able to talk with Him not to Him only.

You can't see God but you can see God in other people. It's impossible to know God who is invisible.

I'd like to think God is working in my life, a plan for my life. This is what I want.

I've always been told that there was someone out there who loves me, but lately I've really begun to believe it. Maybe it's like parents always telling you they love you, then one day you know it.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

Christian religious education is being experienced by Danny and Rita with their deliberate involvement. Their experience is, I believe, constituted of five themes that I have identified as Story, Community, Meaning, Growing, and God. This section of the report presents some conclusions about these themes. These conclusions are what I have come to believe about Danny and Rita. These themes reflect my attempt to draw out and analyze the essence of their experience of Christian religious education.

Story

"Story" is the metaphor that describes the lives of Danny and Rita. This metaphor best describes the journey each is on, a life-pilgrimage in a particular time and place. History would be more objective, narrative more limited, and life more subjective than story. Plus, the metaphor "story" better recreates and expresses the depth and breadth of Danny and Rita than do history, narrative, or life. The metaphor "story" implies the response by Danny and Rita to events, peoples, and callings; it implies the responses of these to Danny and Rita. From this dialectic emerges two unique stories; people with unique meanings and relationships.

The following conclusions from the ethnographic part of this study regarding the theme of story point to the need for a pedagogy that sponsors the uniqueness of Danny and Rita.

1. Danny and Rita express their desire for a pedagogy where meaningful appropriation of the "external" stories they hear or read is accomplished. They wish to have personally arrived at insight into the stories of the Bible, literature, and their teachers. These external stories collide with Danny and Rita daily in their Christian schools. However Danny, and Rita to a lesser extent, do not feel that there is a fruitful synthesis growing out of this collision. They are not now participating in a pedagogy in their schools whereby their personal stories, and the external stories they hear, explain and translate each other. To illustrate, Rita often said that the stories in the Bible do not animate her life. Danny had all but given up believing that whatever meaning he could personally make would be viewed as valid and important by his teachers. As a result, he acts "to keep others out of knowing what I do."

The reason for this lack of synthesis in Danny's experience resides in the perspective placed on the Bible. The Bible is the first and foremost consideration in the pedagogy at Danny's school. Students at Danny's school must eventually line up their lives to the Bible. The Bible is held to be literally the word of God. The tradition of churches or one's personal experience is evaluated as right or wrong on the basis of the Bible. To illustrate, as Danny's father once said to me, a once in a lifetime born again conversionary experience means that a person is saved. This type of conversion is right because in the Bible it says Jesus once told a young man that he must be born again. Danny's father found Bernard Lonergan's (1979) concept of conversion at

a religious, as well as moral and intellectual level, to be problematic.

What is problematic for Danny is not the school's orientation to bibliocentricism, but the lack of a clear and appropriate pedagogic philosophy for directing the teacher to sponsor the synthesis of biblical principles with each individual's personal story.

I believe that there could be an intentional pedagogy whereby both stories, the students, and in this case, the Bible, actually do "experience" each other. As Thomas Groome(a) (1981) suggests, this could be a dialectic hermeneutical relationship between stories where the person's experience is informed by the Bible's stories, and the Bible's stories all appropriated into the writing of the person's story. Yet, the story of the Bible could still confront us, Groome(a) suggests. It could call our personal notions into question as it calls us forward. There would still be limits in our understanding of this story and we could never exhaust its meaning and truth for our lives. This limitation is true because God is the ground of not only the Bible's stories, but of our stories. The explanations of both stories must account for our limitations in our understanding and, as Groome(a) says, move beyond. The dialectical hermeneutic is then the faithful, prayerful, and loving analysis and illumination of each story in the light of the other story.

2. The future is more problematic for Danny than for Rita. Danny doesn't believe that he will live past age twenty five, that the world is going to have wars, and be generally a miserable place to live in. Rita is more troubled by the past, particularly the past of the

Roman Catholic Church. Regarding the future she is hopeful, both personally, and in the broad sense, for the world. She became animated whenever we talked about her future plans or the future of Christianity.

The reason for Danny's dismal outlook for the future resides in his own perceived helplessness. He doesn't have to make decisions because as he said, "basically I have a lifestyle cut out for me (by parents and teachers)." He believes that God is deterministic and actually does control all events on earth. Danny, however, is still hoping for a better situation, one more amenable to his gaining of personal control over his life. Right now he is waiting to get to the mountains to live, trap, and to "find himself."

Rita always projected hope. For her, God is good so the future will ultimately work out for the good. She is open to other people's ideas and loves to explore issues because not all issues in her life are settled. One example of this is her view on such controversies as AIDS. She is not sure that it shouldn't be discussed in high school religion classes, or that someone with AIDS means "hands-off."

I believe from the experience of Danny and Rita that there is a way to sponsor vision and hope in young people in Christian schools. First though, adults must relinquish the control that they have on the futures of their young people. The future is still shapeable and we are only co-labourers with Christ in building the future. Control should be replaced by mutuality and faith when forging a vision. The vision that is being formed by students could be aided and illuminated by the stories and vision of others. For example, the stories of the

Bible could call into question, inform, and perhaps affirm the individual's vision. What may happen is that the vision residing in present action could be illuminated and critiqued in light of the vision of God's kingdom as expressed in the Bible, or in the life of others and of the natural world. Thomas Groome(a) states this in a question,

> How is our present action creative or non-creative of the vision, and how will I act in the future?
> (1981, p. 220)

Groome(a) says that this is choosing a faith response. In Danny's and Rita's experience of story, the faith response is their actual writing of their story, that is, their lives unfolding. The teacher as pedagogue might lead persons like Danny and Rita out past the present to responses in actions and attitudes more full of hope than they now have.

Community

Community is the metaphor I have used to describe the relationships, symbols, institutions, and actions that are being experienced by Danny and Rita. Their "community" has its own bonds and particular, though not always clearly articulated, purposes. It is not as concrete or contextual as a group, a church, or a group of people living in a geographical area. But it is not an abstraction. It finds expression in real ways. It has a past, present, and future. Community is more clearly manifested in Danny's and Rita's churches, schools, or groups than in others I have visited. The reason is that their community cuts across and transcends the particular church, school, or group while still being in, and dialectically related to, time and place. To

illustrate this notion of community, my wife and I recently spent a year working in China. Before this we had fellowshipped in a particular church whose symbols, rituals, relationships, understanding of itself, and actions helped shape itself which in turn shaped us as we contributed to its shaping. A sense of community was born and nurtured. We belonged to these people and they belonged to us. In China, we too eventually found a community we could belong to. Though slightly different in its rituals, symbols, relationships, understandings, and actions, we recognized, understood, and felt many of the same dynamics of the Christian community in Canada. The church in China created much of the same community for us of Christianity, of God, and people revealing each other and acting upon each other. We felt "at home" in the community in China as in Canada because of this community. From this notion of community, Danny was prompted to say that having guest speakers come from other cities and schools is good because it shows that what is happening at his school is happening elsewhere. This commonality affirms what is happening here at his school.

These conclusions are from the ethnographic part of this study regarding the theme of community:

1. Danny's and Rita's actions and attitudes are influenced by what they perceive to be the expectations of their parents and teachers. For Danny, these expectations have largely to do with his "being good" and "behaving" in only one way. These expectations, however, are external to him and he says are only a "push forward."

For Rita, the expectations of others are important when they merge into her own expectations for herself.

Danny seeks to escape the expectations of parents and teachers. Rita seeks to have people know her more fully in order that their expectations could be more appropriately applied to her life.

2. Danny expresses a desire to be understood, particularly by his female teachers. Rita expresses her appreciation of her church and school for helping her understand the world and her motives. Rita's understanding is a conscientization similar to what Paulo Freire (1971) speaks of, where events and circumstances are being decoded for revelation of what actual assumptions and motives constitute those events and circumstances.

The reason Rita's community is amenable to sponsoring understanding of events and of her personal life is because her school community is more oriented to the personal development of young people than to the transmission of the doctrines and foundations of the Christian faith. The tradition of the faith is being carried forward in Rita's community as it is in Danny's. However, rather than the faith having a life of its own where the Bible is literally perceived to be alive, the faith tradition moves into the individual's life and there a synthesis takes place between the individual and the faith tradition. The tradition, in actuality, is trusted to be dynamic by Rita's teachers.

3. The communities of both Danny and Rita are not sponsoring revelation. Control, direction, and transmission are operative words in the lived curriculum. Individuals like Rita and Danny are therefore

not being led into an openness for hearing from God. There appears to be truncated trust in revelation as a viable means of informing and transforming individuals, and an excessive trust in transmission direction, and control to inform and transform. Communities must therefore seek ways to promote the vertical relationship between God and His people while reconceptualizing these horizontal relationships towards more mutuality and trust.

4. The communities of Danny and Rita need to search out a more theologically right pedagogic language in which to express their purposes, aims, and objectives. Words which do not appear enough in their school's statements include loving, faithing, conversion, hoping, mutuality, responsibility, forgiving, and affirming of individual experience. These are words that I believe best capture the heart of Christianity as lived in community.

5. Rita's and Danny's families are more influential to them and their faith than are other expressions of their communities, including school and church. This indicates that if families are strong and principled, they can still serve as the primary socializational influence regarding Christianity.

Growing

The Oxford dictionary defines grow as "becoming gradually ... advance to maturity." It defines mature as "complete in natural development; with fully developed powers of mind and body." The dilemmas that many teachers face in Christian religious education concern the meanings of growing and maturity and how best to sponsor both. The divisions in orientation to pedagogy that arise from these

dilemmas are many. One way to view the divisions is from an idealist or realist perspective.

Idealists in a Platonic tradition, in the stress of the permament, the absolute, and the eternal, are oriented to the developing of the changeless soul, the nature of which is set at conception. Human nature is determined by heredity. True knowledge and growth comes from within, through eternal and changeless ideas of the spiritual world. The implications for the Christian educator is that God changes directly and sponsors growth.

Realists in the Aristotelian tradition depend more on the external, the sense experience, and scientific induction to gain knowledge. They would maintain that it is through engagement in the world, theorizing about it, and acting upon it that we can change. The implications for the Christian educator is that God works through these "human" processes to change and sponsor growth.

The implications of teachers' orientations to either an idealist or a realist position cuts through to curriculum and to the way teachers are with their students. For example, in Danny's and Rita's schools, teachers have different approaches to students. The approaches vary from the type of instrumentality and control that is exhibited to the amount of freedom and trust shown in students' growing, and to a belief that growing will and can unfold naturally and normally. The following conclusions are from the ethnographic information drawn from Danny's and Rita's experience of growing.

1. Growing for Danny and Rita is largely an internal or interior phenomenon. Curiously, the activities of their teachers in presenting

facts, teaching Christian ideas, and organizing learning activities are intended to sponsor growth but have unpredictable and non-correlative relationships to Danny's and Rita's growing. What prompts growing more than the teacher's agenda is Danny's and Rita's wanting to grow. If they do not want to grow, as Danny said, no one could make them do anything.

2. There is little time spent by teachers on meeting the wants that either Danny or Rita have identified for themselves. The majority of the pedagogic time is spent on embodying and presenting Christian contents: the foundations, the systems, and the doctrines of Christianity. Their teachers would tell me that the power to sponsor growth resided in these externals. I observed that to identify the wants of Danny and Rita in fact did not even ensure that teachers could provide pedagogical encounters which, in fact, sponsored growth. This was so, I believed, because there was not, in either situation, a clearly articulated method understood and agreed upon by Danny and Rita for linking their interiority with the external, or the systems, foundations, and doctrines of Christianity. When growth occurred, it often happened in unplanned ways, in the lived curriculum in times and situations where Danny and Rita were, for example, modelling someone they respected. To illustrate, Rita wants to grow to be respected by her family and to please a God who, she says, is good. So for Rita, the times of greatest joy, peace, and growth were times being with her family, times going to conferences where male speakers were presenting, and going home and just being thankful for her home being there. For Danny, the nexus to his growth remained unclear. Both his teachers and

he were unable to understand his interiority and his growth. What was clear to Danny and Rita was that they personally determined their own growth. The most influential factor affecting their growth was their wanting or desire to grow.

3. Danny and Rita deliberate over their experiences. Danny "... looks at the pros and cons ..." and asks himself, "... would Jesus do this?" Rita says that she "... wants to find out (what things mean) for herself." She accomplishes this best by meeting a variety of people, and by trying to see how God and Christianity fit into all her subjects.

To be able to deliberate for Danny and Rita means that eventually a personally meaningful answer to most problems might be found. To deliberate means Danny and Rita infer from what they experience to their own lives, and that this inference has the chance of being affirmed and understood by teachers and parents. When they are deliberating, they are asking the "large" questions about their lived experiences and circumstances. The why, how, what, and where questions are the large questions that once prompted all of us to explore and to find out about life. Sadly, Danny no longer feels free to deliberate in this way with his teachers. To illustrate, he says that his teachers tell him what things in the Bible mean. All Danny needs to do is to memorize Bible passages and live the truths inherent in the Bible. Then he will know what the passages mean. What Danny wants, however, is to know what the Bible passages mean immediately for his life.

I suggest that the following comments show one way that teachers might understand their role in cooperating with students' deliberating. Bernard Lonergan (1979) and Thomas Groome(a) (1981) say that there is a place in pedagogy for both the content of the Bible and the interiority of a person. Groome(a) talks about the dialectical hermeneutical relationship of both. Prior to either a teacher or student making final judgements or decisions, the story and vision of Christianity in scriptures is presented so as to be appropriated into the context of the unfolding of the student's interiority. The question directing this process is, "what does the Christian story mean for my story and how does my story respond to the Christian story?" The movement, however, in both Danny's and Rita's experience is mostly from the Christian story to their story.

As the student grows in confidence in deliberating, the place of subject matter becomes almost self-evident. The person starts to ask questions, and subject matter is used to inform the student's searching. Judgement occurs when the student becomes interested in what people might be saying in debates about issues. The place of the subject matter of the Christianity is after students have deliberated over their concrete experiences. This is where Rita's frustration with irrelevant religion classes is most evident, because deliberations are not being sponsored on her particular questions. Authentic doing emerges from deliberating only when the person takes personal responsibility and is engaging in praxis, authentically praying, loving, and faithing. Unfortunately, Danny says his doing is largely "to keep others from knowing what he does."

God acts in this process because He created it, Lonergan (1979) suggests. Teachers do not have to assume much responsibility at all for it. They act as midwives of the events of deliberating, insight, and doing. They encourage the primordial question and themselves get in touch with their own interiority, judging, and reflecting. They encourage personal responsibility for themselves. Teachers need to teach and encourage people to deliberate if they wish to sponsor the gaining of insight.

5. Not enough credit or acknowledgement is given to Danny and Rita for what they already understand about Christianity. Understanding here means the empathetic, the "how to," and the "why." In Christian education, all modes of understanding, from the sensory-motor to the synthetic, need to be used. To be understanding we need an image of the event or concept being presented to us. Lonergan (1979) suggests a shuffling of the data of this event or concept into a suitable constellation for the person so understanding leaps out. We need to generalize from this experience, collect ideas and see the ideas as part of a pattern. To illustrate, Rita spent eight years in non-forgiveness of the nurse who might have saved her father from dying. Yet all the time she admitted that she was deliberating over the notion of forgiveness, asking about it, judging, and finally, as she understood what the Bible said and what was right to do about forgiveness, she came to understand forgiveness, and forgave the nurse in her heart. She felt love and calm regarding this issue finally at sixteen years of age. Rita had put a value as a goal rather than personal satisfaction. She came to understand herself, the nurse, and

the circumstance. She took ownership over the situation. She decided to act and did so. If someone would have forced her to forgive, she would not have gained this ownership and gained understanding.

In sponsoring understanding a teacher can share through prose, poetry, history, the Bible, or people the values enshrined there. The inner world is expanded by the release of fantasy. Any notions apprehended in this way by a student, though ostensibly notional to an outsider, have great potential to become the building blocks of real apprehension when the person engages in personally chosen doing.

There is, in this way, the synthesis of the subject matter of Christianity, and the unfolding interiority of the student. The teacher deliberately handles the dialectic with an understanding of the subject matter and of the student's interiority by presenting the doctrine from the words and life of Jesus Christ. It is Christ who would understand the whole, understand what was true, and would know what the student would hear in the doctrine. It is the origin of the doctrine, the truth behind the truth of Christian systems and of the foundations of our faith, that we need to have revealed. Only then can these doctrines, systems, and foundations can become meaningful. In this way, teachers teach the truth behind the Bible, because if something is written in the Bible it is there because it is true, universal, and good.

Meaning

The main aspect of this theme was that Danny and Rita were actively engaged in meaning-making. They were not as involved with the uncovering of the meanings others have as they were in making personal

sense of Christianity, of Christian religious education, of school, of their teachers, and of church. They each had their own interpretive methods. Danny was, in the language of learning style theorists, concrete and experimental. He would say that "a person has to be there to understand something." He felt that teachers need only to present an idea or concept, and then let the students engage it and try it out. Danny's religious thought is grounded in experience. Rita was more abstract and conceptual, and enjoyed making meaning by trying to see underlying patterns and connections. In a sense, Rita was the more faith-full of the two. She could live in the tension between faith and understanding quite comfortably and trusted that her faith would lead to understanding eventually. She wasn't, however, prepared to live outside incarnational Christianity. She questions that which confuses her with the purpose of eventually (and personally) appropriating and understanding her Christianity. With Danny, the experience was one of being in a pedagogic encounter with the doctrines, foundations, and systems of evangelical Christianity. This encounter is characterized by preservation and maintenance of the meaning of the Bible, church, and Christianity as interpreted in bibliocentric, evangelical Christianity.

The following conclusions from the theme of meaning suggest that teachers should consider anew a pedagogy that intends to sponsor student's abilities and success in meaning making.

1. The emphasis in the planned curriculum in Danny's and Rita's school is in skillfully and technically correct ways presenting the truths of Christianity. I believe that the expertise of their teachers

is not in understanding and sponsoring Danny's and Rita's meaning-making. The expertise of their teachers resides mostly in transmission of content, that is, in setting objectives, choosing innovative instructional strategies, and applying concepts to day-to-day living. Teachers may have some awareness of learning styles, theory, temperament, theory, or faith stage theory generally. But they do not practice a pedagogy that involves these tools of meaning-making in Danny's and Rita's personal meaning-making. The curriculum in both schools is primarily Tylerian, means to ends and from teacher to student. There needs to be more attention placed on individualization of curriculum that truly affirms and sponsors the uniqueness of every individual and their abilities and predispositions regarding meaning-making. More understanding of the stages young people typically pass through in faith, moral development, cognitive development, and physical development needs to precede pedagogic encounters. Understanding of development would help teachers sponsor the successful transition of stages.

2. Danny doesn't want Christianity taught similarily to academic subjects. Christianity is basically a faith way of being in the world and as such requires a pedagogy of faith. Faith may do more for informing reason than reason does for informing faith. Therefore more insight into where faith comes from and how it develops is required by teachers in Christian schools.

3. Rita wants people (teachers) to "... hear the song of my life and not just the words." I believe that Rita and Danny are typical of those of us who desire to be understood and accepted unconditionally.

This means, in essence, that teachers cannot nor should not strive to change their students. This is God's job. Teachers should strive to love and understand their students.

4. Neither Danny nor Rita could articulate what Christianity meant to them very well. In fact, their concept of Christianity changed throughout the year. Perhaps teachers need a clearly articulated concept of Christianity that too is open to modifications. I propose that a concept of Christianity be shared early in a school year that helps organize all pedagogy in the school. I propose that this concept would acknowledge that we live within the limits of our understanding because Christianity is about the eternal, the timeless, and the transcendental. I propose that the concept include some ideas regarding the function of local churches in Christianity, faith, relationships with God and others, how these are developed and made right, the kingdom of God, love, hope, and conversion.

5. Finally, neither Danny nor Rita felt that the existing paradigm of schooling was being effective in reaching young people for Christianity. Rita said that schools are limited just by their physical arrangement. Danny was deeply frustrated generally with school and couldn't wait to get away. Both desired a particular kind of atmosphere to be evident in Christian schools in order that the existing limitations be overcome. This atmosphere meant for Danny and Rita that people willingly said, "I love you", and that teachers be patient and understanding of students.

I propose that the concepts of Christian growth and faith which are so essential to Christian education require a reconceptualization

of existing school paradigms. I propose a more authentic linkage among parents, churches, schools, and communities with the goal being a pedagogy that socializes while it sponsors growth, knowledge, and Christian values. Perhaps "schooling" in the Christian sense can no longer occur in schools. Perhaps the parents once again must be the prime educators of their children in deliberate and planned ways.

God

These conclusions are taken from the ethnographic part of study regarding the theme of God.

1. God, for Danny and Rita, is masculine. For Danny, God is far off and powerful, yet intervenes when asked to in the lives of people. God can "... zap you" if he so chooses, but only if required so by the actions of people.

For Rita, God is good. He has given Rita everything she needs and yet continues to be immanent and involved day-to-day in her interiority. Rita talks with God conversationally, and rarely talks to God in formal prayer.

Who God is and who Jesus Christ is needs more attention in Christian religious education. Christianity is true and viable on one premise: Jesus Christ, as truly God's son, died and then rose from the dead to redeem humankind from their sin. The ostensible incomprehensibility of such a premise has been problematic for human beings since the time of Christ. Many questions require reasonable answers as a result of this premise. "Why did God choose this way? Who is Jesus Christ? What response does this require of me personally? Who am I in relation to this premise? How am I supposed to "be in the

world" as a result of this premise? What is life supposed to mean as a result of this premise?"

At the heart of these questions is a pedagogy leading to a knowledge of God, a knowledge in the deeply reflective and potentially experiential sense. It is in these types of questions that teachers and students need to reside pedagogically.

Implications for Christian Religious Educators

1. The story of the Bible, the central message of Christianity, needs to be treated as a "living word." As a living word, the Bible story and an individual's story should experience each other. The Bible story can truly be allowed to be transformative. The Bible as a living word, means that the meaning of the Bible is allowed to do its own transformative and meaning-generating work.

2. An individual student's story contains a past and future, as well as a present. Teachers need to deliberately attend to all aspects of a student's story. To teach using a student's past experience and future "vision" in deliberate curricular experience helps ensure relevance and transformation.

3. Growth, or transformation, is a process that needs deliberate sponsoring by educators. When the encounters, understandings, judgements, and responses of the student experience the story of the Bible, growth is possible.

4. To acknowledge the hidden curricular effects of teacher expectations, assumptions, and agendas means to acknowledge that what is really "learned" by students is often unintended; and that the very

expectations, assumptions, and agendas themselves may impede and distort learning.

5. A "central idea," or a main theme for Christian religious education aims and purposes, needs to undergird all the pedagogic encounters between teacher and student. The main idea becomes the interpretive key for the student to understand all the experiences, and information he/she encounters. The main idea needs to be true and based on the story of the Bible. For example, the Kingdom of God is a particular way of being in the world that comes about from a right relationship with God and a right relationship with others. This particular way of being in the world (i.e., praying, serving, loving, obeying, etc.) brings about these right relationships.

6. Who God is, and who human beings are, can be explored pedagogically. Examination of the relationship possibilities of God to student, and student to God, may help promote a student's choice of how best to relate to God.

CHAPTER XI

REFLECTIONS

Throughout the years in my involvement in Christianity and Christian religious education, I have wondered, "what is it like for others to experience Christian religious education? Does the term Christian religious education mean the same for others as it does for me?" I was convinced that the study would be valuable for at least three reasons. One reason was that I had been unable to find another study like the one I was embarking on that would, in an in-depth way, provide insight into the unique experience of others. In this in-depthness, I was going to be interviewing, as well as participating and observing, in the homes, schools, and communities of others. I believed that if I understood what the experience is like, then I could more cogently share with fellow educators ideas for perhaps a more redemptive and "Christian" pedagogy.

A second reason why I believed this study to be valuable was that I would be called to greater understanding of my own journey and be opened to a greater understanding of the way things are. I believed that I might discover one small part of my reality as a Christian human being.

A third reason was that many colleagues in the Christian schools, church, the university, and in the community were excited about the potential insights that could come from such a study.

The first two months, almost exactly, were spent in the schools and homes, primarily recording observations, interviewing principals and teachers, talking informally with Rita and Danny, and visiting

classrooms, gymnasiums, and hallways. In this way, I hoped to build trust, familiarity, and a certain type of blending with the surroundings. They called me "the shadow" at one school during this time. The purpose of this time was to so immerse myself in the setting that the in-situ, or situation of each participant, could be known as fully as possible. It was my presupposition that the roles, the ideas, the institutions, and the objects of each setting all are imbued with a meaning as they are experienced and acted upon. It was this "whole" situation that needed understanding. To illustrate, the Bible has, in historical Christianity, meant the actual, written word of God transcribed by inspired men. But within the experience of those in Christian religious education, a variety of meanings within and outside this meaning may be imposed on the Bible. The meanings may be; the Bible as a history book, the Bible as guidelines for proper living, the Bible which is a story of God's dealings with peoples, or the Bible which tells the story of Jesus Christ. Therefore, by immersing myself in the setting, I could best understand what the particular overall meanings of the Bible were. For example, what were the general contexts and background "taken for grantedness." I could know, for example, what the Bible means in each situation. This understanding of a one "particular" would grow as I understood the whole. My build-up in understanding of the particulars and whole was dialectical. The dilemma of trying to understand the whole in the particulars and the particulars in the whole was worked out in the dialectical relationship of these. As well, understanding had come in the patience and time

that I took to let them reveal themselves to me. The notion of the hermeneutic circle became real for me in this research.

The initial two month period of participant observation seemed to naturally evolve into a time of more in-depth interviewing, probing about my observations, and testing meanings of their experiences. I experienced a humbleness and respect for each participant's openness and growing honesty with me. As themes emerged and I probed deeper, I had a sense of the sacredness of each of the participants and of growing awe of the insight I was gaining. They indeed seemed to have interiors as vast as the universe as Lonergan implies and have stories that are as unique in the universe as fingerprints.

I began to transcribe tapes, analyzing their meanings, searching for a deeper ground. I interrogated these texts for what was essential in them, for what they were exposing. Where I felt I understood, I recorded this as "an understanding." However, I was always careful to take this "understanding" back to them for verification. Where I did not understand, or partially understood, I generated new questions from their statements. To illustrate, Danny early on talked about "wanting." He said, for example, that "teachers cannot make you do anything if you do not want to." I probed often in the next months regarding what wanting meant, and what this wanting meant in relation to what his teachers were "making him do." The dialectic was at work.

In this way, my descriptions, analyses, and understandings were revised more than once. I began to submit ethnographic reports to my committee members in February, hoping to bring other eyes to see if their experience was in fact the way I was viewing it. One member of

my committee suggested that it would be better if she could read my field notes, analysis statements, and journal reflections as these would be one step closer to the "real" experience. This I did and clarification of such subthemes as male and female roles in their community and differing expectations came to be revealed.

In the final months of the study, I began to see the value of having transcribed, analyzed, and thematized my data as soon as it was gathered. There were hundreds of pages of field notes, interviews, analysis statements, and journal entries which had been continuously codified and sorted. There was a surprising ease then in my choices of what to leave out and what was important to include. It became clearer through the months what comments were essential in their experience and what were not. Some comments were repetitive, some were clarification comments; others were not able to be probed to a deep enough level to be included here. One example of this was the death of Rita's father.

Early in the study, my advisors, colleagues, and professors warned against trying to fit their experiences into any predetermined theoretical predisposition. If I did not the result would be a story that was devoid of authorial intrusion, and one that a reader could choose the way into its interpretation. This was problematic, because I was aware that, in fact, I had a theoretical predisposition. However, it was this awareness and the articulation of this theory that allowed me to move the theory aside and approach the study openly. If the theory were to be used to influence the data from the participants' experience it would not be mixed into the shared life activities and meanings of my participants. I would intentionally hold off until past

the description, analysis, understanding, and thematization phases of my research to the final phase of the research. Here, in the final chapter entitled "External Hermeneutic" I use the data from the participants' experiences to call into question my theory, to inform my theory, and to be appropriated into my theory. In this way, the essential beginning phase of my research, my story written in the foreground chapter could, for the time being, be brought to a close.

I did find it useful to go to the literature during the study to see what others' perceptions of Christian religious education were. I explored the praxis notion of Thomas Groome(a) (1981), the traditioning notion of Mary Moore (1983), the notions of interiority and theological "method" of Bernard Lonergan (1979), and the notions of language use in curriculum by Dwayne Huebner (1982) among others. In this way, I uncovered new ways into analysis and interpretations. I also re-interpreted both my own theory and experience in each new light as a result. To illustrate, I began to see that what Bernard Lonergan had said about the natural process of the unfolding of levels within our interiority indeed happened. As I attended to the data of Danny's and Rita's life, there started an unfolding of insight in me that informed me not only about Danny's and Rita's experiences, but about my own experience. I came to new understandings of the notions of understanding and praxis as I engaged these in the study.

As I began to write my descriptive portrayals, I would therefore add new interpretations and experiences. I would engage in dialogue with my advisors and colleagues which called me to examine my own orientation to pedagogy. I entered into the new territory of a

pedagogy of mutuality, love, and trust in God. I began to re-examine what these were meaning to Danny and Rita and if their experience was characterized by these activities.

Finally, in late April, I settled on the five themes of the study that seemed to be most constitutive of their experience. I developed my subthemes shortly after and in May went back to Danny and Rita, and their teachers, with these themes to see whether they agreed. This generated new insights while reinforcing my choice and naming of themes. To illustrate, with the theme of God, Rita revealed what her experience is actually like with God. She had previously described how God has been presented to her in her school and home but had not revealed the deep trust she has in a God whom she experiences as loving her by keeping her home and family safe.

The continual sorting through of field notes, interviews, and journals resulted finally in a decisive choice of what to include in the final report. Here I realized that, in fact, this report can never be final. I will read a different report ten years from now, since I will have grown and changed. New understandings will emerge then that have remained hidden today. For today, the best I can do is to report the findings and then, in one final step in the journey into understanding, re-examine my original theoretical predisposition in the light of the emergent understandings from Danny's and Rita's experience of Christian religious education.

SECTION III: INTERPRETATION

CHAPTER XII

EXTERNAL HERMENEUTIC

In this section, I attempt to interpret my understandings regarding the experience of Christian religious education of Danny and Rita. Here, models developed externally to their experience are applied to their experience so that interpretations may be made. The models used to interpret have been developed based on my personal Christian experience, and on the work of Thomas Groome(a) (1981), Bernard Lonergan (1979), and Dwayne Heubner (1982). The models allow me to see and to question Danny's and Rita's experience in particular ways. Also, Danny's and Rita's experience allow me to see and to question the models in particular ways. These are two questions guiding my interpretations. 1) "How do the models inform, put to question, go beyond, and support the experience of Danny and Rita?" 2) "How does the experience of Danny and Rita inform, put to question, go beyond, and support the ideas of the models?"

The models are an early attempt at naming a pedagogically Christian process of education. The models could be used now to evaluate pedagogy, to inform existing pedagogy, and to help design curriculum. They offer insights into three main aspects of an individual's education: 1) one's intended reflective action or outward journey in the world; 2) one's intended reflective understanding or inward journey in oneself; and 3) how one's reflective action and reflective understanding influence the other, and are influenced by

God's workings so that personal conversion, faith, love, hope, church, and discipleship are nurtured.

The parts of the models that appear in Chapter One will be explained in the next section. The models appear in diagram form in this section as well. Next I outline where parts of the model have been put to question by Danny's and Rita's experience, and where Danny's and Rita's experience have been put to question by the ideas of the models. Finally, conclusions regarding Christian religious education are presented.

The Models Explained

1. The student's desire and ability to reflectively act as a Christian in his or her world comes from a successful inward journey. Praxis arises from interior engagements with the meanings, interpretations, evaluations, and insights of self, others, experiences, information, and God. The sponsoring of the inward journey of the student that leads to praxis is the first movement of the model. The development of the student's interiority is the goal. The methods used by teachers include questioning, answering, dialoguing, probing, searching, wondering, mutuality, and understanding. The student is led by the methods to the various engagements. The steps in the process of the engagements are: 1) encountering the data of self and the "others" (experiences, information, God), 2) understanding the data of self and the others (unlocking motives and assumptions), 3) hearing the gospel, 4) judging the meanings, interpretations, evaluations, and insights from steps 1 and 2 illuminated by the gospel, and 5) responding appropriately to the judgements made in reflective action (Groome(a),

1981). The key to this first movement is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The truths in the gospel call into question, inform, and affirm (Groome(a), 1981) the students' experiences while being held up for interpretation on the basis of the student's experience. The gospel should mean something for the student's experience.

Ultimately, such motivations as fear, pleasing others, pride, and selfishness are recognized as operative in interiorities, and practiced in their place are authenticity, confidence, mastery of fear, and selflessness. The student converts intellectually, morally, and spiritually (Longergan, 1979) to the kingdom of God as presented in the gospel of Jesus Christ. As the student moves into his or her world by responding personally in prayer, loving others without rotten motives, hoping, and trusting in God, encouragement is given to review their conversion and resultant insights anew. The personal and community responses of the student are held up to be informed and affirmed by the insights of their conversion, while their conversions and insights are encouraged to be open to appropriate new meanings from experiences with God, self, and others.

Teachers ultimately need not know all that is happening in the interiority of their students. Their role is to be "hands-off," non-manipulative, not controlling or directing the students' behaviour. Instead, their role is to engage with the students in mutuality, co-responsibility, a discipleship of sharing, loving, and hoping. It is God's role to direct, manipulate, and control. Through the students' wonder and deliberatings on one's meaningful questions, their

interiority unfolds (Longergan, 1979) through understanding, judging, praxis, and loving.

2. The second movement of the model is the one more often associated with instruction and schooling. The purpose is reflective understanding, to make available to the students the values and teachings of the Judeo Christian tradition. Students can be led to experience this by learning, seeing, modelling, reading, attending church, school religion classes, and through dialogue. The teacher makes available first the foundations of the gospel, with the intention of the student coming to a literal and comprehensive understanding of the truths underlying the gospel. For example, that Jesus Christ died and rose again should be known first. Only then does the student understand through inference and generalization the need for a saviour.

Next, the doctrines or general policies that one should live by because of the truths of the gospel are made available. Analysis and synthesis of the gospel's many stories into blueprints for moral and Christian living are encouraged.

Third, the student is encouraged to name a personal life plan of goals, principles, and values as a result of the first two steps regarding foundations and doctrines. Symbolic understandings of the gospel are encouraged since the student will design his or her own particular life plan, not the life plan of teachers, Bible heroes, or friends.

Finally, the praxis of the student is encouraged and affirmed. Personal understanding in action and action in understanding is the aim. The intended understanding moves from literal to personal, from

surface to depth. The praxis that results has a reflection component that is personal and informed.

3. The third movement of the model is the continual and intentional bringing together of meaning of both previous movements: intended reflective action and intended reflective understanding. The students' community of faith, church, home, and school are first and foremost supposed to sponsor intended reflective action through the inward journey and development of the students' interiority. Next they should be sponsors of intended reflective action, of pedagogical encounters with the foundations, doctrines, and systems of the Christian gospel. The synthesis of the two, guided by a community full of Christian principles, means Christian praxis. The diagrams which appear later in this section shows the two movements.

Both movements are continually colliding, merging into each other as one asks of each movement what has been made clear, and what has been affirmed or disaffirmed in the other. The merging of meanings from each movement is facilitated and promoted by teachers who themselves are engaged in the same outer and inner journey, and who themselves are praying, faithing, loving, and hoping. The relationship that develops with God as a result becomes the teachers' main pedagogical tool, as the student watches and models. Conversation and discipleship promote the students' dialectic into a deeper relationship with God. This movement takes years. The diagrams attempt to represent this process.

It's at this third movement conversion is truly possible. It is here that insights into God's way and plan are revealed in the

students' interiority. These include insights into God's will, conversion, prayer, and insights by the teacher into each unique student and how best to participate with them in their intended reflective actions and intended reflective understandings.

In the theory of this movement, the student is floating on the will of God which is leading towards a relationship with God who created him or her, and a relationship with others with whom they live. The will of God is that the students, in a particular way, have these relationships come about and nurtured by being in their world, on their "floating" journey. This particular way of being in the world was made clear by Jesus Christ. On the journey, the participation by the student in this way of being in the world includes conversion. Lonergan (1979) names the three types of conversion: religious, moral, and intellectual. Together, in the theory, they comprise the "born again" experience. Religious conversion is the awareness of God and the spiritual world; moral conversion is the acceptance of personal ethically chosen values. Finally, intellectual conversion is the total knowing and participation in the will of God.

This conversion happens usually over time but may happen at one time. As it does happen, it calls into question the particular way the student is being in the world. That is, the "converted" student is open to being informed anew about responding to God and to others, about relating with God in prayer, love, trust, and hope.

The dialectical hermeneutic is at work here, for as the student's responses are being pushed, illuminated, and called into question by the new state of internal affairs, the conversion itself is being

affirmed, pushed beyond, and informed by the new relationships. Also, there is a new conscientized sense of community, or the world, which further pushes the person to act as co-labourers with the will of God in the life of the community. New eyes are peering out into a dying world and seeing new hope and way for its rescue.

The underlying premise is that the student has been freed to "get it from God". The responses that result from this prayerful reception from God are clean from vested interests of others. The student owns his own journey and does no one else's "floating." However, there is a particular way teachers cooperate with students and with God in the realization of this particular way of being in the world. This is the way that comes about through relationship with God and with others, and is, in turn itself brought about by the nature of these relationships, in the faithing, hoping, loving, forgiving, attending, understanding, and so on that have been described by Jesus Christ. Therefore the teacher's role, as spiritual director or discipler, has four parts:

a) Cooperate with the natural unfolding of insight and the development of the student's interiority.

b) Structure appropriate pedagogic external experiences in appropriate ways so as to present the real story of Christianity.

c) Bring the natural unfolding or development of the student's interiority into a dialectical hermeneutical relationship with the external experiences, and

TABLE 1

THE STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Up-down movement in learning/ knowing Questioning/ answering, probing, searching, sharing, feeling.

Intended Reflective Action

The experiencing (below) and developing (above) are in a dialectical hermeneutical relationship with each other. How is the student's experience of knowing and growing to conversion (above) informed by the Gospel's Story and Vision (below); and how is the Gospel Story and Vision appropriated into the context of the child's knowing and growing to conversion.

Intended Reflective Understanding

Down-up movement in instruction - lecture, dialogue, discussion, role play, games, film, drama, dance, art, modelling.

The development of the Child's interiority - towards full knowing and conversion and response

Interiority = the invariant structure, in the Lonergerian sense, that is built through five movements - attending or experiencing, understanding, judging, responding, and loving. It is a dynamic, active, responding reality.

PRAXIS

1. Encountering-Attending to the data of one's personal story and vision. Awareness here is one's own action and praxis. "What is my present action?" "What am I intentionally doing as a Christian?" Religious conversion is made possible.
2. Understanding - The understanding of one's personal story and vision. Awareness here is on "Why am I doing this action and what are my hopes and reasons for it. This is the uncovering of motives, assumptions and genesis of one's personal praxis - personal, cultural & moral. Moral conversion is made possible.
3. Experiencing - The experiencing of the Gospel's Story and Vision. (Foundations, Doctrines, Systems, Communications.)
4. Judging - Evaluating one's personal story. Awareness here is on the dialectical hermeneutical of one's personal story and the Gospel's Story and Vision. This awareness is on how one's personal experiences of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community response is informed by the Story; and how the Story is appropriated into the context of my personal experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community response. (What does the Christian Story mean for my Story, and how does my Story respond to the Christian Story.) Intellectual conversion is made possible.
5. Responding - The praxis of the student, the reflective action has been made possible. The aim is personal understanding/action.

STUDENT

9. Communicational - The praxis of the child, the reflective action has been made possible. The aim is personal understanding/action.
8. Systematical - The specific plans for living are experienced drawing on the symbolism of the Gospel's Story and Vision. This aims at symbolic understandings and stresses goals, principles and values in the context of cultural interests. Intellectual conversion is made possible.
7. Doctrinal - The overall, general policies that one should live by because of the Gospel's Story and Vision are experienced. This aims at intended understanding, the analysis and synthesis of Gospel thought into an intended life pattern. Moral conversion is made possible.
6. Foundational - The basic beliefs of the Gospel's Story and Vision are experienced in a philosophical whole. This aims at literal and comprehensive understanding. Religious conversion is made possible.

PRAXIS

The experiencing by the student of the values and teachings of the Gospel's Story and Vision

experiencing - hearing, seeing, feeling, modelling, reading, following, sensing, writing through the community, church, school.

characteristics - love and trust, assumes universal value and truth, dialectic/ scholastic/humanistic, teacher/other initiated.

Personal Responses
1. Relating with God, in Prayer (love)
2. Relating with others, (love)
3. Relying on God (hope)
4. Responding to God with trust (faith)

Community Response
1. Christian conscientization to self, to church, and to cultural life.

CONVERSION
1. religious
2. moral
3. intellectual ⟷ dialectical hermeneutical relationship ⟷

dialectical = Hegelian - positive, affirmation + negation -- new idea

hermeneutical = interpretative - from person to experience back to person.

conscientization = awareness clear of interests

TABLE 2

THE PARENT'S PARTICIPATION IN CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Up-down movement in co-development - questioning, dialogue, sharing, probing, searching, feeling

The (co-operative, catalytic) co-development (with God) of the child's interiority towards full knowing: conversion and response.

1. Encountering: Asking the child to attend to the data of one's personal story and vision. Awareness here is on the students naming their own action and praxis. The parent elicits "What is the students present actions? What are you intentionally doing as a Christian?" Religious conversion is made possible.

2. Understanding: Leading the child to understand one's own personal story and vision. Awareness here is on inviting the students to reflect on "Why am I doing this action and what are my hopes and reasons for it?" This helps the student uncover genesis and cultural grounding of praxis. Moral conversion is made possible.

Intended Reflective Action

3. Experiencing: The Gospels Story and Vision are made available. (Foundations, Doctrines, Systems, Communications)

4. Judging: The child is moved to evaluate her/his story. Awareness here is on inviting the student to respond to "What does the Gospel Story and Vision mean (appropriated into, affirm, make clear, call beyond) for my Story and Vision, and how does my Story and Vision respond to (affirm, push beyond, inform) the Gospels Story and Vision. The awareness is on the dialectical hermeneutical relationship of the two Stories and Visions; that is, the child's own experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community responses, informed by the Story, and the appropriation of the Story into the students own experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community responses.

PRAXIS

5. Responding: The praxis of the child in the light of the Gospels Story and Vision, the reflective action, has been made possible. The teacher helps elicit the praxis, then motivates, encourages, guides, models, explains ... leading to personal understanding and action by the student.

The presentation movement (below) and the cooperative catylitic co-development (above) are in a dialectical hermeneutical relationship with each other.

PARENT

9. Communicational: The praxis of the child in the light of the Gospel Story and Vision, the reflective action, has been made possible. The teacher elicits the praxis, then motivates, encourages, guides, models, explains ... leading to personal understanding and action by the student.

Intended Reflective Understanding

8. Systematical: The specific plans for living are presented drawing on the symbolism of the Gospel's Story and Vision. This aims at symbolic understanding, and stresses goals, principles and values in the context of cultural interest. Intellectual conversion is made possible.

PRAXIS

7. Doctrinal: The overall general policies one should live by because of the Gospel's Story and Vision are presented. This aims at intended understanding, the analysis and synthesis of Gospel thought into an intended life pattern. Moral conversion is made possible.

6. Foundational: The basic beliefs of the Gospel's Story and Vision are presented in a philosophical whole. This aims at literal and comprehensive understanding. Religious conversion is made possible.

Down-up movement in instruction - lecture, dialogue, discussion role play, games, film, art, dance, drama, DLA's, modelling

The presentation by the parent of the values and teachings of the Gospel's Story and Vision

A GUIDE to conversion
1. religious
2. moral
3. intellectual

dialectical hermeneutical relationship

B. Modelling Responses
1. Ministry of the Word to co-pilgrims
2. Relationship characterized by love, trust and vision

C. Transmission Responses
1. Knowledge of Gospel's Story and Vision and pedagogic "soundness" in transmitting
2. Openness to praxis as a way of knowing

presentation
- hearing, seeing, modelling, reading, sensing, writing, speaking, moving, feeling, encouraged through DLA's.

characteristics
- love, trust, vision, knowledgeable teachers, capable of praxis.

TABLE 3

THE TEACHER'S PARTICIPATION IN CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Up-down movement in co-development - questioning, dialogue, sharing, probing, searching, feeling

The (co-operative, catalytic) co-development (with God) of the child's interiority towards full knowing: conversion and response.

1. Encountering: Asking the student to attend to the data of one's personal story and vision. Awareness here is on the students naming their own action and praxis. The teacher elicits "What is the students present actions? What are you intentionally doing as a Christian?" Religious conversion is made possible.

2. Understanding: Leading the student to understand one's own personal story and vision. Awareness here is on inviting the students to reflect on "Why am I doing this action and what are my hopes and reasons for it?" This helps the student uncover genesis and cultural grounding of praxis. Moral conversion is made possible.

Intended Reflective Action

3. Experiencing: The Gospels Story and Vision are made available. (Foundations, Doctrines, Systems, Communications)

4. Judging: The student is moved to evaluate her/his story. Awareness here is on inviting the student to respond to "What does the Gospel Story and Vision mean (appropriated into, affirm, make clear, call beyond) for my Story and Vision, and how does my Story and Vision respond to (affirm, push beyond, inform) the Gospels Story and Vision. The awareness is on the dialectical hermeneutical relationship of the two Stories and Visions; that is, the students own experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community responses, informed by the Story, and the appropriation of the Story into the students own experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community responses.

PRAXIS

5. Responding: The praxis of the student in the light of the Gospels Story and Vision, the reflective action, has been made possible. The teacher helps elicit the praxis, then motivates, encourages, guides, models, explains ... leading to personal understanding and action by the student.

TEACHER

9. Communicational: The praxis of the student in the light of the Gospel Story and Vision, the reflective action, has been made possible. The teacher elicits the praxis, then motivates, encourages, guides, models, explains ... leading to personal understanding and action by the student.

8. Systematical: The specific plans for living are presented drawing on the symbolism of the Gospel's Story and Vision. This aims at symbolic understanding, and stresses goals, principles and values in the context of cultural interest. Intellectual conversion is made possible.

Intended Reflective Understanding

PRAXIS

7. Doctrinal: The overall general policies one should live by because of the Gospel's Story and Vision are presented. This aims at intended understanding, the analysis and synthesis of Gospel thought into an intended life pattern. Moral conversion is made possible.

6. Foundational: The basic beliefs of the Gospel's Story and Vision are presented in a philosophical whole. This aims at literal and comprehensive understanding. Religious conversion is made possible.

Down-up movement in instruction - lecture, dialogue, discussion role play, games, film, art, dance, drama, BLA's, modelling

The presentation by the teacher of the values and teachings of the Gospel's Story and Vision

The presentation movement (below) and the cooperative catylitic co-development (above) are in a dialectical hermeneutical relationship with each other.

A GUIDE to conversion
1. religious
2. moral
3. intellectual

dialectical hermeneutical relationship

B. Modelling Responses
1. Ministry of the Word to co-pilgrims
2. Relationship characterized by love, trust and vision

C. Transmission Responses
1. Knowledge of Gospel's Story and Vision and pedagogic "soundness" in transmitting
2. Openness to praxis as a way of knowing

presentation
- hearing, seeing, modelling, reading, sensing, writing, speaking, moving, feeling, encouraged through BLA's.

characteristics
- love, trust, vision, knowledgeable teachers, capable of praxis.

TABLE 4

THE PRINCIPAL'S PARTICIPATION IN CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Up-down movement in co-development - questioning, dialogue, sharing, probing, searching, feeling with teachers and parents, theorizing and actualizing school policy which facilitates development and praxis of students

The (co-operative, catalytic) co-development (with God) of the students and teachers interiority towards full knowing: conversion and response, child personal and community, teacher-modelling.

Co-development - The principal facilitates the students development (personal and community responses) and teachers modelling and transmissive responses which in turn influence students development.

1. Encountering: Asking the student and teacher to attend to the data of their personal stories and visions. Awareness here is on their naming their own action and praxis. The principal elicits "What are our present actions? What are we intentionally doing as Christians?" Religious conversion is made possible.

2. Understanding: Leading the student and teacher to understand their own personal stories and visions. Awareness here is on inviting the student and teacher to reflect on "Why am I doing this action and what are my hopes and reasons for it?" This helps the student and teacher uncover genesis and cultural grounding of their praxis. Moral conversion is made possible.

3. Experiencing: The Gospel's Story and Vision are made available. (Foundations, Doctrines, Systems, Communications)

Intended Reflective Action

4. Judging: The student and teacher are moved to evaluate their stories. Awareness here is on inviting them to respond to "What does the Gospel Story and Vision mean (appropriated into, affirm make clear, call beyond) for my Story and Vision, and how does my Story and Vision respond to (affirm, push beyond, inform) the Gospel's Story and Vision. The awareness is on the dialectical hermeneutical relationship of the two Stories and Visions; that is, the students and teachers own experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community responses, informed by the Story, and the appropriation of the Story into the students and teachers own experience of knowing and growing to conversion and personal and community responses.

PRAXIS

5. Responding: The praxis of the student and teacher in the light of the Gospel's Story and Vision, the reflective action, has been made possible. The principal helps elicit the praxis, then motivates, encourages, guides, models, explains ... leading to personal understanding and action by the student and to modelling responses by the teacher.

The presentation movement (below) and the cooperative catylitic co-development (above) are in a dialectical hermeneutical relationship with each other.

A. Guide to Conversion
1. religious
2. moral
3. intellectual

dialectical hermeneutical relationship

B. Theorizing and Actualizing Response
1. Student school life
2. Teacher - modelling assistance

C. Policy Responses
1. Soundness in structuring school life (programs, curriculum, etc.)

PRINCIPAL

9. Communicational: The praxis of the student in the light of the Gospel Story and Vision, the reflective action, has been made possible. The principal facilitates the praxis, then motivates, encourages, guides, models, explains ... leading to personal understanding and action by the student, and to modelling and transmissive responses by the teacher.

Intended Reflective Understanding

8. Systematical: The specific plans for living in the school are presented drawing on the symbolism of the Gospel's Story and Vision. This aims at symbolic understanding, and stresses goals, principles and values in the context of cultural interest. Intellectual conversion is made possible.

PRAXIS

Down-up movement in structuring - beliefs, procedures, policies, specific plans, overt and hidden curriculum.

7. Doctrinal: The overall general policies one should live by in the school because of the Gospel's Story and Vision are presented. This aims at intended understanding, the analysis and synthesis of Gospel thought into an intended school life pattern. Moral conversion is made possible.

6. Foundational: The basic beliefs of the Gospel's Story and Vision for the school are presented in a philosophical whole. This aims at literal and comprehensive understanding. Religious conversion is made possible.

The structuring by the principal of the values and teachings of the Gospel's Story and Vision into the school's life-world.

structuring = programs, overt and hidden curriculum

characteristics = love, trust, vision, knowledgeable teachers, capable of praxis.

d) Encourage, from this mutual informing and affirming, a praxis of intended reflective understanding of the will of God in the journey of the student.

The Models with Danny and Rita: An Interpretation

Parts of the model have been called into question by Danny's and Rita's experience. Danny's and Rita's experience have been called into question by parts of the model.

1. The most important engagement for Danny in his school is with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Intellectually he is converted. By his own admission, he is spiritually converted but not morally converted. Why he refuses to or cannot engage in praxis regarding his Christianity remains unclear.

2. The pedagogical emphasis in both experiences is on the intended reflective understandings. There is neither a philosophy or a curriculum in place for promoting the dialectic hermeneutical relationship of the students' intended reflective understandings and intended reflective actions. Where should teachers place their pedagogic trust, in transmission of the faith or in the students' unfolding interiority in relation to the faith?

3. Rita engages naturally in the process of unfolding her interiority. Her praxis helps her make meaning of the foundations, doctrines, and systems she participates in. Her school promotes the process but tends to emphasize the foundations and history. Whose meanings are the most important for Christian praxis to occur?

4. Conversion is a pedagogically available experience in Danny's situation. It is hoped for or expected in Rita's experience and

school, but there exists no formally intentional means for accommodating this. What does, in fact, promote conversion?

5. The Christian story informs and transforms. If the Bible is truly the very "words" of God, and Christ the "logos" or the word incarnated, cannot either indeed transform and inform? How should both be made available to students so their work of informing and transforming is left alone?

6. The community of Danny has a degree of spiritual unity and commonness of purpose that could promote the two movements of the model. There exists among most teachers and in Danny's family an intensity, desire, and motivation to see the kingdom of God, as they've interpreted it. Is community, or the body of Christ, ultimately what will make the difference in the world?

7. How do desire, will, and emotion contribute to Christian praxis? Danny and Rita repeatedly refer to their "wanting." Can Christian pedagogy bring in and include the desire, will, and emotion of the student?

8. Having a spiritual director or discipler is something Rita desires. How might communities of faith encourage and promote spiritual involvement in each other's lives so as to correctly assist in the work of God through both movements?

9. If the heavens do indeed declare the handiwork of God where else might students be directed to look to see God's kingdom and way being manifested? Can literature, the great people of the past, science, and one's physical life of work and play also inform and transform?

The model has indeed been put to question by the experience of Danny and Rita, just as Danny's and Rita's experience has been put to question by the model. Both will undoubtedly change, just as they have changed, in the midst of God's kingdom coming to fruition.

Conclusions

It is my conviction that praxis (the whole way people have of knowing and coming to know) and conversion (the Christian's coming aware of God's presence in his/her life) work together to inform the Christian's life of intended action. These concepts are in a dialectical as well as a hermeneutical relationship. That is, praxis and conversion influence each other and cause Christians to understand and reinterpret, with increasing awareness, their own lives and the part that conversion plays in their own faith response.

The direction of the relationship of praxis to conversion in Danny's and Rita's experience is from conversion to praxis. This is true more so in Danny's experience where students are not Christians if they have not been "born again," and therefore cannot engage in genuine Christian praxis. Since only born again Christians can experience a true knowledge of God, non-Christians would only be doing "good works," a perjorative term used by Danny to describe any actions that are outside the born again Christian's response to others and to Jesus Christ.

Praxis leading to conversion is not evident in Danny's experience. Conversion comes only through praying to God, repenting, and repeating what Danny's teachers named a "sinner's prayer." This prayer is a confession of one's sin and the acknowledgment that only God, through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, can make a person "right."

In Rita's experience, conversion was not a familiar concept. Rita believed she experienced "little" conversions all the time. From her conversions she would attempt to shift her actions and attitudes toward a more Christian response. For example, she felt that she needed to be more concerned about the needs of her fellow students. Her thinking became "converted." In this way conversion influenced praxis and not the reverse. The debate over which understanding of conversion is correct is theological, not practical. Schools, I believe, should promote both conversion and praxis and allow God to work His unique will for each student practically into their lives.

It is my conviction that the Christian story has an informing as well as a transforming function. It informs the foundations, doctrines, systems, language, and communications of believers. In Danny's experience, more than in Rita's, the Christian story was informing. This story, as it is literally told in the Bible, becomes Danny's situational basis for knowing how to live. The nature of this belief creates the flavor of Christianity and Christian religious education that Danny experiences. This "flavor" is bibliocentric and Christ-centered. God, Danny believed, has revealed Himself in the Bible particularly through Jesus Christ. Therefore, the most significant informing aspects of any Christian's life are: (1) the Bible, and (2) Christ. These revelations must, for Danny, influence pedagogy. Pedagogy must transmit the objective "facts" of the Bible. For Danny, however, this implies that Christianity must be a set of do's and don'ts.

In Rita's experience, the Christian story is meaningful when it can be translated to speak to her present, concrete life. The story is not so much iconic and informative as it is a personal revelation of God's love for her. She believes God loves her, regardless of her actions. Yet God's love makes her want to live according to His will.

Danny suggests that it is important to see how Christ lived, why He helped people, how He kept His cool, and why He did not sin even though He was tempted. The human Jesus Christ presents an example of living that Danny can see, learn from, and appreciate. Rita, on the other hand, sees a Jesus not bound by time and place. In fact, God is the "truth." His message has relevance for her growth now as a person. Jesus saving her was not something that just happened two thousand years ago; it is happening today. Faith for Rita is much more trust oriented, while faith for Danny is much more action or behavior oriented. I believe that Christian schools need to trust the Christian story to both inform and transform the lives and wants of their students.

It is my conviction that, if Christian religious education intends to teach students to act in the world as Christians who authentically integrate praxis with conversion, it must recognize and affirm the "life world" of the person. Participants in Christian religious education must begin to encounter their own personal stories and visions. Both teacher and student must, together, consciously name both their actions and their understandings in the name of Christian religious education. Christian religious education, if it is to be workable, must be considerate of personal stories and visions.

The pedagogy Danny experiences begins first with recognition and affirmation of the Christian story. Danny encounters the Christian story directly, or in translated form through the presentation of doctrines, foundations, and systems. The purposes of his school and the structure of the curriculum there are designed to make available, reveal, and render clear the core truths of Christianity in the Bible as interpreted in the context of evangelical Christianity. The life-world of the student should eventually line up to the word of God, not the other way around. The story is used as a Christian validation for experiences and intended actions.

It is my conviction that reflection on one's personal action is crucial for Christians who wish to critically understand their own beliefs, assumptions, and actions. This reflection, in the Freirian sense, is the beginning of conscientization. Participants in Christian religious education, in a spirit of trust and in the realization of the potential existential danger of uncovering their own rotten motives, must begin to decode their understandings and actions and engage in the question, "Why do I act like I act or believe like I believe?

Danny and Rita were capable of considering their beliefs and actions. As developmentalists have suggested, Danny and Rita could grasp eternal realities and project their beliefs and actions into other contexts. They could be critical and relate their lives to altruistic values. Rita, in particular and largely due to her reflective personality and temperament, enjoyed the activities of "decoding" which we engaged in over the year. For her, this was a way to help her live a better Christian life (doing good for others and

being grateful to God). I believe that schools should trust their students to grow and God to do His unique work.

In a pedagogical sense, much growth took place through the context of the conversations that I, as an adult, had with Danny and Rita, as students. These conversations did not come easily; yet as the year progressed, they became a natural and an authentic part of our growth, mine and theirs. Powerful Christian religious education should provide opportunities for authentic conversation between teachers and students. Both can inform and transform the other.

It is my conviction that authentic conversion and praxis in the form of a faith response can occur only when the Christian story is presented in a meaningful form and through a variety of pedagogical modes. Only then can it influence the story and vision of the individual Christian. By making available the teachings of both Jesus Christ and the Judeo-Christian tradition, the participants can truly be informed and transformed. For Christian religious education, this implies selectivity. An important question is: "What is to be conserved and highlighted?" It means a recognition of the work of the developmentalists and a better understanding and acceptance of personal and historical realities. It means attention to the pedagogy of the models we adopt to present the story. We must make problematic what we consider knowledge and how we believe we come to know.

As Danny and Rita come to understand themselves and the reasons they do what they do, they are forced to answer questions about themselves. These questions are dynamic and take energy. Danny and Rita really wanted to know the answers to both external questions (why

are things like they are in this world?) and internal questions (Why do I act like I do?). At times, Danny and Rita attempted to make meaning of the stories of Jesus, the church, the way their teachers were, or the behavior of their fellow students. They did so in their own ways, and sought to refine their own ways. They rejected necessarily their teachers' ways of sublating, for example, the teachings of Jesus and the foundations, doctrines, systems, language, and communications of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Danny and Rita were their own people, and had to understand their own becoming. Both Danny and Rita wanted to know what 'things' meant for them.

To Danny and Rita, this phase is critical. They are at a crossroads. Throughout the year, I suspected that Danny remained at the place of only seeking to know "personally." He continually pushed back against the Christian story as it was being presented, particularly by his teachers, because it was repetitive. As he said, he was learning nothing new. Rita seemed to grow in her ability to understand the Christian story through her own living.

It is my conviction that Christians must reinterpret the Christian story and vision from their own contexts, appropriating the truths and letting the story affirm or, in some cases, rebut their own stories. For Christian religious education, this means dialogue and articulation among participants. Personal answers must be sought for what really is a personal question: "How might I live more faithfully in the context in which I "am being" now?" Total respect and love for individuals by their teachers is required here.

Danny's and Rita's experience highlights the struggles of adolescence and identity formation. They are sometimes frustrated by their inability to make sense of their external and internal worlds. They desire to have their perceived wants met. For them, any dialogue about these personal, ostensibly non-spiritual issues is highly "spiritual" and extremely interesting. There are many aspects of their own stories that they want affirmed. It seemed that Rita, more so than Danny, realized a need for a spiritual director or discipler who would, in respect and love, help her articulate personal answers to her personal questions.

It is my conviction that Christianity is a faith-way of being in the world that emerges from and influences one's relationship with God and others. For Christian religious education, this requires both a personal and a community response characterized by faith, hope, and love. Christian religious education needs a community that can help to transform and itself be open to transformation. This community includes the church, school, community, and home. Its members must be open to conscientization about its dynamics of authority, freedom, conversation, liberation, sin, and righteousness. In essence, this community must offer living faith response to the hope and vision of the kingdom of God as presented by Jesus Christ, the saviour and Lord of humankind.

CHAPTER XIII

A LOOK BACK

This past year has profoundly influenced my life. I have been allowed into the sacred world of two beautiful people. I have been brought back as a result to my own sacred world and have been more in touch with my own experiences and vision than at any other time in my life.

Somehow, through all those revelations I know a truth that I never knew before. God, my God, is at work in my life. He is having His way with me, is loving me, and redeeming every square centimeter of me. All my striving and fears are things I have thought up. I have been allowed a peep into a possible life where I do not need to fear, or struggle, or die. I am being made, as the Bible says, "into the image of Christ." This is what I mean by how profound the research has been. I see the same thing happening with Rita and Danny. I long to tell their teachers and parents to get their adult hands off their lives, to let God in, to let them unfold as God is desirous to orchestrate. Let everyone cooperate with what Whitehead called "the natural rhythm of learning."

I have been asked in these last months of writing how to practically and concretely do this. "Do not we need Christian curriculum and Christian schools and Christian books and Christian discipline?" Yes, I believe we do, but these need to be reconceptualized so a genuine praxis, fueled by God, becomes the lived curriculum of Christian religious education. If we integrate Christian principles into our own praxis in humility, let us admit that we cannot begin to

exhaust the truth that is in that principle. If I say I know God and know life, and then stand outside in the deepest, clearest night of the year and look up into a trillion light years of space, then I am the most deceived of people. If I attempt to reduce God's word down to human conceptualizations and deliver it as my interpretation, then I am a charlatan. In fact, I am playing God and that is dangerous.

What schools and teachers can do is rather what they can be. They can be communities of mutuality, love, forgiveness, vision, dialogue, responsibility, faith, and praxis. They can be places that do pray, do break through to God, and listen to God to be directed by God. They can be places of humility and searching, of affirming God's story, and each other's story. They can be places that live in the realization that whatever is in the Bible is there because it is true. It is not simply true because it is in the Bible. Therefore there are immense, wonderful, and profound truths about God and our world about which we have an eternity to find out. The truth behind the words in the Bible is complete and our eternal search will illuminate this and together, we will celebrate this truth.

Christian teachers can read and dialogue and strive to become "converted" Christians themselves, to give what they truly have. In this way, students can read the truth of God's word daily as it is being written in the life of the one who is with them day in and day out. From this search, I propose a definition of Christian religious education.

Christian religious education is attending to and cooperating with God's activity within and surrounding the student. It is a particular

way of being with students that deliberately and in mutuality reveals God's activity historically and in the present with the final goal as right relationship formation with God and with others.

Finally, during the months of being with Danny and Rita, and spending time with their parents, teachers, and principals, confusing and often threatening, circumstances arose. Three "large" circumstances presented me with unique decision-making opportunities.

The first circumstance existed pervasively from the start of the research. Danny and Mrs. Neibhur did not get along. The reasons for this uneasy relationship were difficult to determine, so I avoided any intervention. However, I was faced with their comments about each other weekly.

The second circumstance also concerned Danny. In April he exploded in an emotionally charged way regarding his feelings about the school, his teachers, and his inner pain. I decided not to intervene or counsel, believing, at the time, that I might somehow contaminate the research.

The third circumstance concerned Rita and the memories of her father and his death eight years ago. Often these memories seemed significant, yet I was troubled and confused by Rita's justifiable responses of grief, and rarely pursued, in interviews, how the experience of her father's death affected her.

To engage in qualitative-type research, where the research instrument is the researcher, means encounters with experiences and circumstances that will stretch the limits of researcher wisdom. Researchers

will have to depend on their wisdom to decide when and how to intervene in more personally involved ways.

A POSTSCRIPT TO DANNY'S STORY

Danny's story does not appear to be a satisfying one. The ending doesn't seem to be a happy one. Throughout the past two years I realized that the teachers and principals in the school Danny attended worked long and hard in trying to reach Danny, to love and understand him. Mrs. Neibhur desired to help Danny. Mr. Creighton, Danny's principal, desired to help Danny. The school was a good place for Danny to be because its people did care, its people actively looked for the inroad into Danny's interiority. With quietness and strength, characteristics displayed by both Mrs. Neibhur and Mr. Creighton, people in the school were prepared to cry for Danny or to rejoice with him.

In June, Danny moved to another country with his family. The ending is bittersweet. Yet the seeds planted by the school may yet sprout and grow in Danny's life. Danny may yet shed the frustration that weighs so heavily on him.

I credit the school, Mr. Creighton, and Mrs. Neibhur for truly living the Gospel of Christ with Danny, and await with them for the fruit of their labours with Danny to show in the years to come.

A POSTSCRIPT TO RITA'S STORY

Rita graduated from Kerygma in 1987. She is attending the University of Alberta and is enjoying the life there immensely. She still lives with her mother and keeps in contact with her friends from Kerygma. She remains a deeply intuitive, reflective, and engaging person.

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APPENDIX A
PART OF TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #1: DANNY
SMALL OFFICE

CATEGORIES	INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS	UNDERSTANDING	QUESTIONS
	B. Danny, what is your present level of Christianity?			
	D. Well, uh, I'm not really excellent and I'm not for sure bad it's just that I read the Bible, pray and quote, do all the	- self-image is Christian		
behaviour	Christian stuff and I don't get into drugs or anything like that and I try to stay away from			
	things like that though sometimes I do get persuaded and I'll go and do things with my friends so I'm still	- not being a "goody-goody" Christian is N.B.		
normal	your average mischievous kid. I'm not really un-Christian in my actions if you know what I mean.	- incongruency between perceived self and action - he <u>knows</u> this		
	B. So in other words, you are committed to Christianity but are normal.			

APPENDIX A (Cont'd)
PART OF TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #1: DANNY
SMALL OFFICE

CATEGORIES	INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS	UNDERSTANDING	QUESTIONS
good / Christianity as lived	D. Ya, I don't try to play hi-fi Christian good guy if you know what I mean.	- Christianity is something you do, not something you are		Is Christianity something you are or something you do?
	B. Here's another tough question. What has led you to this commitment to Christianity? Why do you read the Bible? Why do you pray, believe in God?			What do you do as a Christian?
faith stage	D. Because ever since I was even able to listen and comprehend I was told the Bible story, I was told that the Bible was the word of God. God's the maker of all things. He's the miracle maker and He can have whatever He wants and if He doesn't like you you can	- teaching has been "transmissine" and "familial" - socializational He has been told the story "over and over."	Moran and Westerhoff's "Community"	
fear	* be zapped, it's up to Him, so I just got to the point so that instead of	Is God a zapper of people? Is this fear of God healthy?		How does God control your life?

APPENDIX A (Cont'd)
PART OF TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #1: DANNY
SMALL OFFICE

CATEGORIES	INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS	UNDERSTANDING	QUESTIONS
concept of God	everyone just telling me that if He doesn't want you to have this or have this situation to happen			What part does your teacher/ parents play in determining your future?
predestination	... it won't happen. So	nurture		
obvious	* it's <u>obvious</u> that everything depends on Him. So it's Him, the whole earth is really Him so no one, no other really book to consider when you're having trouble or things like that.	"it's obvious everything depends on him" - What does this mean? It seems his CRE experiences has at least taught him what he should think vis a vis "their" orientation (ie. his family, school, etc.) Does he in fact <u>believe</u> and <u>do</u> this reality?		
	B. ... it's because as far back as you can remember it's been a part of your family. What leads you now?			

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #3: RITA
SCHOOL

CATEGORIES	INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS	UNDERSTANDING	QUESTION
	B. What leads you day in and day out to trust in God?			Can God speak to us? -individually? How do you hear Him? How can you be taught to hear from God?
temporality as motivation thankfulness (security)	R. I think just the fact that every day has its new, is kinda of a challenge, like you don't know if you are going to live every day. I wake up in the morning and say thank you. I did that one day and it felt so good to say thank you, you know? And I think one day it felt good to see my house there, still standing, no harm had come to it. I've come to look at things, not take them for granted, but trust that God will ... so just past experiences ... it sounds confusing.	CRE needs to teach our temporality, our "breath like nature" so as to appreciate our life day by day. Rita has this. Stability and concreteness... a grounding is needed for security. Is this because of her losses?		What could be done to help people learn how to deal with life's setbacks?

APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #3: RITA
SCHOOL

CATEGORIES	INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS	UNDERSTANDING	QUESTION
	B. No, not at all, its clearer than you think, just keep talking. You've seen things in the past and you want to trust ... What leads you to act as a Christian?			
	B. If you think back, something has obviously gone on to cause you to believe in Jesus. What in the past can you recognize as having influenced you to have believed in God?			
family	R. ... my family's own faith has a lot to do with it ... I've had ... well, not a lot but a couple ... well. God touches you every day ... but I've had a few incidences.	The shared faith in the family is a cry that has been answered for Rena (see Five Cries of Parents)		Ask Rena to do a life history for me.
	B. Could you describe any?			

APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #3: RITA
SCHOOL

CATEGORIES	INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS	UNDERSTANDING	QUESTION
God's healing	R. Well I handed in a paper today and she wanted to know when God's healing power had touched me and I can tell you that. I was nine when my dad died eh, and uh ... when that happened it was a great big loss and I don't know if age had anything to do with it and I immediately looked for someone to blame. (Nurse's story and subsequent forgiveness of her.) We had confession here at the school and I asked God to absolve me ... I realized it was a sin ... I felt so calm after that ... I don't know what it means but I know what I felt and a real calm, a real peace	See Abbs paper 549 on laying down the emotional/ affective first Perhaps CRE has to be more "gut-level" more experiential and affective ... less cognitive ... before "knowledge" or meaning occurs Rena goes on feelings. Could CRC educate these?		Is the school really helping you to grow?
forgiveness				
sin				

Appendix C

Journal Entry

Danny

November 20

Last week was Bill Gothard, boy was that some trip. Two people were totally changed around from good to bad, and a couple didn't care. I found B.G. very adultish. He did not tell the teenagers their real problems. He dealt more with adult problems. That's what I didn't like about Bill Gothard. B.G. was a time of learning though. I learned that one must rid himself of all evil even before he tries to be righteous. B.G. is a wise man when it comes to principles. He had 7 steps to break a habit and on some people it worked. B.G. was fun.

Today is Sunday and I have nothing better to do than write in my journal. Today the preacher preached on how important letting others know that you're a Christian by your actions. I guess it is hard in some situations to act like a Christian when you are with your non-Christian friends though. I hope that I can do what the preacher said to do when I get older and more courageous.

Appendix D

Journal Entry

Rita

December

How do we make CRE more meaningful? It seems to me that right now, kids my age who are semi-serious/interested in being Catholic, being Christian, are living in a pleasing "Catholic" way due largely to memorizing of right things, wrong things - Am I making sense? What I mean is - they aren't coming to conclusions and answers about morality, Christian living, etc. by themselves. They are listening to answers of questions coming from people, which are memorized, and just as everything memorized and not understood, lies meaningless but ready to be relayed in an automatic fashion because it is what they "believe." So, then how do we make the religion more meaningful? No easy answers, but what about a compromise? I don't mean compromise our religion, and morality. I think those two things are pretty well set and immovable. But what about a compromise in the way it is taught. Instead of a discussion that has a teacher "instructing" his class how to live Christian, what about a 50/50 split between instruction and discussion. No teenager appreciates having their questions concerning faith, morality/what have you - given a steely "no, this is not what the church teaches." What about a "Maybe, but what do you think about ..." or "I can see your point, but there's also this alternative ...." Do you kind of understand what I'm trying to say? Personally, I don't enjoy asking a question, that I'd really like to answer to because I'm doubting something, being thrown back at me, unanswered, except for "No, that's not right, this is right" and a speech about Vatican II that I could have read out of a book.

Just some ideas!

Talk to you later,

R.K.

APPENDIX E

FORMAT OF ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

Categories	Description (Observation and Direct Quotes	Analysis (Inferences, hypotheses, casual links, first and second order concepts	Understanding (The "I See" experience)	Thematic Pattern Emergence	Questions to Confirm Observations, Analysis, Understandings and Themes

- ethnographic reports
- sharing of field notes with second ready
- validating themes with participants
- personal reflections in journal

Appendix F

Framework of Guiding Questions: Interview #1

I have outlined a framework of guiding questions for each participant, intended to serve as the initial starting point in the initial interview. From here, and in subsequent observations and "chats," new foci for interviews will emerge and the interviewing will become increasingly conversational. The first question for each concerns conversion. The next set of questions concern participants' "responses" or praxis.

Student:

1. What is your present level of commitment to Christianity? What has led you to believe, trust and act in faith? What do you understand by this commitment?

2. How does this reflect your relationship with God? How does this reflect your relationship "with others''?

3. What is the nature of your relationship with God?

4. What do you feel are most important to do in your church, community, school, world, etc.?

Teacher:

1. In what ways do you see your responsibility to the child in terms of conversion?

2. Do you see yourself as a model?

3. In what ways do you go about being a model?

4. Could you describe a typical day?

Parent:

1. What are your most important considerations in parenting your child to conversion?

2. What experiences are most important for your child in growing as a Christian?

3. In what ways are you preparing your child for Christian life?

Principal:

1. Are there different aspects of the school which encourage conversion? How do these facilitate conversion?

Appendix G

A Message From The Principal: Alliance Covenant Community

A Christian Philosophy of education is basic to the existence of Alliance Covenant Community. I trust you have chosen our school to help you fulfill your responsibility as parents to provide God-centered and Christ-honoring education for your children. The task and responsibility of the home in raising children and educating them is firmly established in the Bible (Exodus 12:26-27 and Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

In modern times, the necessity of educating our children in the Lord is even more important as the Scriptures say deception and false teaching will abound (2 Timothy 3:1). Christian parents face a formidable task in educating their children in a God-centered, Christ-honoring fashion. For this reason, they have joined hands with other Christian parents to provide the kind of education that God has given them responsibility to provide. So, Christian parents send their children to a school where a teacher may stand "in loco parentis" -- that is, "in the place of the parent." It is from this injunction that the Christian school takes its authority for existence.

The Christian school is an extension of the home. The teacher stands in the place of the parent. The teacher is to exercise the authority in the classroom that a parent would. Children are to obey their teacher as they would respect and obey parents. Scripturally, the authority to educate belongs to the parents; they delegate authority to the teacher for the time the student is in attendance at school.

Parents who send their children to a Christian school must guard against the danger of letting the school be a substitute for the Christian home. The Christian school is a supplement to the teaching and training of the home and is not to take the place of the home in teaching and training. The Christian family is the basic unit God has provided for the Christian education of children. The instruction and example of parents in the home is still the foundation. Properly viewed Christian education is partnership education: that is the home and school working together.

Thank-you for the honor and the trust you have given to Alliance Covenant Community. It is our prayer that our school will be a living example of the truth of Christ before your children. We enter the sixth year of operation with the challenge found in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (NIV)

Yours truly,

Mr. Creighton

Appendix H

Alliance Covenant Community

Doctrinal Statement

1. There is one God, who is infinitely perfect, existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest. He will come again to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace.

3. The Holy Spirit is a divine person, sent to indwell, guide, teach, empower the believer, and convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

4. The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.

5. Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God; he fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The portion of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment; and that of the believer, in everlasting joy and bliss.

6. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; and those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life, and become the children of God.

7. It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion.

8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures and are privileges for the Church in this present age.

Appendix H (Cont'd)

9. The Church consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church, which has been commissioned by Him to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations.

   The local church is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together for the worship of God, for edification through the Word of God, for prayer, fellowship, the proclamation of the Gospel, and observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

10. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life; for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment.

11. The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillenial. This is the believer's hope and is a vital truth which is an incentive to holy living and faithful service.

Appendix H (Cont'd)

A. Educational Philosophy of Alliance Covenant Community

The educational philosophy of Alliance Covenant Community is based on a God-centered view of man and truth as presented in the Bible. Since God created and sustains all things through His Son, Jesus Christ, the universe and all life are dynamically related to God and have the purpose of glorifying Him. This is pointedly true of man who was made in God's image, different in mind from all other creatures, with the unique capacity to know and respond to God personally and voluntarily. Because man is a sinner by nature and choice, he cannot, in this condition, know or honor God in his life. He can do this only by being born again to do God's will. This should be the ultimate purpose of his life.

The authority for such an education comes both from God's command that children be taught to love God and place Him first in their lives, and from the fact that parents are responsible for the total education and training of their children. At the parents' request, the Christian School, along with the Church, becomes a partner in giving this education. From this philosophy stem certain aims and objectives:

1. FOR THE SPIRITUAL AND MORAL GROWTH OF THE STUDENT, the school seeks

   a. to teach the Bible as God's inspired Word and to develop attitudes of love and respect toward it,

   b. to teach the basic doctrines of the Bible,

   c. to lead the pupil to a decision of confessing Christ as Savior and Lord,

   d. to develop a desire to know and obey the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures,

   e. to equip the student to carry out the will of God daily,

   f. to impart an understanding of each Christian's place in the church and its worldwide task of witnessing, evangelism and discipling and to stimulate the student's involvement in this task,

   g. to develop the "mind of Christ" toward godliness and sin, and to teach the student how to live an overcoming life through exercising of self-restraint and consideration of others,

   h. to encourage the development of self-discipline and responsibility in the student based on respect for and submission to God and God-ordained authority, and

Appendix H (Cont'd)

i. to help the student develop for himself a Christian world view by integrating life and studies with the Bible.

2. FOR THE STUDENT'S PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, the school aims

a. to help the student develop his personality based both on a proper understanding and acceptance of himself as a unique individual created in the image of God and on the fullest possible development of his own capabilities,

b. to teach the student to treat everyone with love and respect since others too are made in God's image,

c. to make the student a contributing member of his society who realizes his dependence on others and their dependence on him,

d. to promote an understanding of time as a God-given commodity, and the individual responsibility for effective use of time,

e. to show a Biblical view of life and work, and to provide skills for personal relationships and future endeavors,

f. to develop good and proper attitudes toward marriage and the family and also the understanding and skills needed to establish God-honoring homes,

g. to promote physical fitness, good health habits, and wise use of the body as the temple of God, and

h. to impart Biblical attitudes toward material things, and to encourage individual responsibility of using them for God's glory.

3. ACADEMICALLY, the school endeavors

a. to promote high academic standards within the potential of the individual as uniquely created by God and to help the student realize his full academic potential,

b. to help each student gain a thorough comprehension and command of the fundamental processes used in communicating and dealing with others, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening,

c. to teach and encourage the use of good study habits,

Appendix H (Cont'd)

d. to teach the student how to do independent research and to reason logically,

e. to motivate the student to pursue independent study in the areas of personal interest,

f. to develop creative and critical thinking and the proper use of Biblical criteria for evaluation,

g. to promote good citizenship through developing the understanding and appreciation of our Christian and Canadian heritage of responsible freedom, human dignity, and acceptance of authority,

h. to discuss current affairs in all fields and to relate them to God's plan for man,

i. to produce an understanding and appreciation for God's world, an awareness of man's role in his environment, and his God-given responsibilities to use and preserve it properly,

j. to promote an appreciation of the fine arts through the development of the student's understanding and personal expression, and

k. to adapt curriculum to real-life situations in the community.

4. WORKING WITH THE HOMES FROM WHICH THE STUDENTS COME, the school desires

a. to cooperate closely with the parents in every phase of the student's development, especially as it relates to the school program,

b. to help the parents to understand the school's purpose and programs,

c. to aid families in Christian growth and to help them develop Christ-centered homes,

d. to assist parents in keeping up with the changing culture and its effects on the home and the implications for their children, and

e. to encourage regular attendance and involvement in a local church.

Appendix H (Cont'd)

B. Implementation of the Educational Philosophy

The philosophy of Alliance Covenant Community is implemented through the curriculum and the cooperation of the staff, parents, the Society of Strathcona Christian Academy, the Board of Governors, the Administration, and the Church.

1. STAFFING

The Board of Governors of the Academy, together with the Principal, has the exclusive prerogative of selecting teachers for the educational staff. Appointments to the educational staff are made using the following criteria:

a. Each appointee must be a born-again Christian as defined by the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

b. Each appointee must make an affirmation of the philosophy of the school, and agree to and support the objectives of Christian Education in the Christian School.

c. Each appointee must hold a valid Alberta Teaching Certificate.

2. CURRICULUM

The Academy includes grades Kindergarten through grade twelve. The Alberta Department of Education Curriculum is used, with expansion to include regular Bible Study, incidental but purposeful discussion of Christian morals and beliefs as they are involved in the different subjects, and the inclusion of Divine Creation as an alternative to the theory of evolution in the study of origins. The school uses discretion in the selection of literature used in the program, with assistance from a special Literary Committee.

It should be recognized that our school offers primarily an academic program.

3. PARENTS

The community of parents includes all who wish to actively support our philosophy of Christian Education. The primary responsibility for the education of children rests with the parents. Teachers act only in the place of parents, so a partnership is vital to ensure the success of the program. Parents are encouraged to be involved with the child's learning at the school.

The parent-teacher relationship is further strengthened by volunteers on a number of working committees. These groups plan activities and events which mutually benefit and foster good relationships between parents and teachers. Parent-teacher Fellowship meetings also serve to strengthen this relationship.

We feel that it is the parents' responsibility to instruct and to teach their children in the way that they should live. As a school, we would seek to encourage that attitude and involvement by cooperatively instructing the children of our community. A number of child-rearing books are now available in the school library, and are available to parents who are interested.

4. SOCIETY OF ALLIANCE COVENANT COMMUNITY AND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

This Society is a legally incorporated entity that is charged with operating the school. Regular meetings are held, and parents are encouraged to join for a fee of $5.00 per year, or a life-time membership of $100.00. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Society provide that a Board of Governors be elected by the Society. Nominees to the Board of Governors must be members of the Sherwood Park Alliance Church in good standing, and must be approved by the Elders' Board of the Church prior to election. The Board of Governors sets policy and oversees the operation of the school.

The functions of the Board of Governors include the following:

a. To select the Principal and other staff.

b. To interact with the various Volunteer Committees.

c. To interact with the Church Elders' Board and Deacons' Committee.

d. To approve the school's curriculum.

e. To establish the discipline procedure.

f. To ensure that high moral and educational standards are maintained.

g. To oversee the financial aspects of the school's operation.

Appendix H (Cont'd)

5. CHURCH-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP

The School is an outreach ministry of the Covenant Alliance Church. As with all Church programs, the objective is to reach out to the community to tell all about the saving love of Jesus Christ.

6. ADMINISTRATION

The Administration of the Christian School must be designed to ensure that the stated Philosophy is implemented, to ensure that the parents' concerns regarding the education of their children are fully expressed and realized within this philosophy, and to ensure that the requirements of the Provincial Department of Education are met.

The Principal and all staff through him are directly responsible to the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors, in turn, is accountable to the Elders Board of the Church, as well as the Society of School. Of course, it is never to be forgotten that each person involved in the structure is finally and ultimately accountable to God for the way in which he conducts his affairs and discharges his duties.

C. Admissions Policy

The School is open to people of all backgrounds. However, being a Christian school that has its roots in orthodox, evangelical Christianity, the Academy will only accept students whose parents consent to and support their being trained in accordance with Biblical principles.

New students in Grades 10, 11 and 12 are admitted only after an interview with the student to determine the student's willingness to cooperate with the goals of the school. Returning students may be interviewed as well, at the discretion of the administration.

New students are accepted on a trial basis until they have demonstrated right attitudes and actions. Normally, this period of time will end after the first report card. Parents will be informed should the trial period need to be extended.

Appendix H (Con't)

A. OUR SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND DOCTRINAL STAND

Much thought has been given to our precise goals in operating a Christian School. We have tried to express those goals and our basic philosophy in a statement which is given in detail in the Student-Parent Handbook. Teachers are encouraged to study that statement carefully and to make sure that they are in accord with the philosophy and goals of SCA.

Because Alliance Covenant Community is an outreach ministry of the Covenant Alliance Church, it is expected that all teachers will uphold the Doctrinal Statement of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. (See Student Handbook)

B. DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Discipline Policy is:

a. To set forth the disciplinary measures that will be taken against unacceptable behavior.

b. To assign responsibility for the disciplinary action.

c. To provide for the communication to all involved (parent, student, teacher and administrator) of the cause for discipline and the action taken.

d. To provide for accurate record keeping of disciplinary actions so that discipline may be administered throughout the school in a firm, fair and consistent manner.

e. To establish the principle that discipline must be seasoned with grace if it is to be salutary and godly.

In all, justice must be tempered with grace and compassion (Ephesians 4:32 and 1 Peter 3:8,9). The purpose of discipline at the school is not merely to enhance the learning environment, but to train and lead the student into maturity and self-discipline.

Appendix H (Cont'd)

2. PHILOSOPHY

Discipline and its application at the School is grounded in scripture. (See particularly Proverbs 12:1; 13:18, 24; 22:15; Ephesians 5:1-4; Hebrews 12; 1 Corinthians 13; and Revelation 3:19.)

Just as discipline and disciple come from the same root word, so it is, we believe, that the full meaning and intent of discipline should be not only to correct behavior, but also to build up, encourage and train an individual in concepts as well as behavior that is pleasing to God. God admonishes us that reproof and correction are to be administered in love and with a measure of grace and compassion. In this context, discipline must never be administered vindictively, in anger or devoid of forgiveness, or in a manner that is demeaning to the worth of an individual. Discipline is ordained of God for the building of character and the training of behavior.

3. OBJECTIVES:

Discipline at the School has these objectives:

a. To develop and maintain the optimum environment for learning.

b. To correct behavior which is disruptive or destructive to the learning environment.

c. To train students in behavior patterns that will be helpful to them individually and to the school community in supporting and achieving the commonly-held goals of spiritual, intellectual,
physical and social development.

d. To remove, as a last resort, recalcitrant students so that the learning environment may be maintained.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Parents have been given the responsibility by God for the discipline of their children. Parents have conferred this authority on teachers and administrators during the school day and in school activities (en loco parentis). If parents have questions or disagreements regarding disciplinary actions, it shall be their responsibility to immediately discuss these questions or differences with the teacher involved and not to bring their grievance to other parents, faculty or students.

Appendix H (Cont'd)

Teachers and Administrators are responsible to God for the lives placed under their care (James 3:1). They have the authority from the parents to administer discipline within the limits and guidelines of the Discipline Policy, including corporal punishment if such is indicated. It shall further be the responsibility of teachers and administrators to work with parents in the matter of discipline, informing them in a prompt manner of disciplinary action taken, and making themselves available to the parents and students involved for discussion and counsel of discipline situations. The ideal objective of this involvement is to foster understanding. To challenge parent and student alike to supportive behavior. To enlist student cooperation and to build a likeminded attitude.

It shall be the administration's responsibility through personal observation, examinations of records and by whatever other means are deemed practical to see that proper standards of discipline within the guidelines of the Discipline Policy are being uniformly maintained throughout the school, and to communicate the status to the Board of Governors.

Students are responsible under God to obey and show respect for teachers and administrators as they should their parents.

APPENDIX I

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

WHO? Dynamic Teenagers - willing to take a risk, to build a school
A Congregation of Women Reglious with a 325 year history of responding to the contemporary scene -

Men and Women Educators - ready to launch a new enterprise -
Parents - enthusiastic at the possibilities for their sons and daughters.

WHAT? A Catholic Independent Coeducational Senior High School with an emphasis on Reverence and Personal Giftedness that:
- challenges young people to CHOOSE LIFE
- offers the rigors of a full academic programme

PLUS

- volunteer service
- work experience
- outdoor education
- music, art, drama

A Community of Service trying to effect justice for all

WHEN? The idea was born in February 1979. The School was opened in September 1982.

WHERE? ORIGINAL LOCATION:

with Grade 10 in 1982,
Grade 11 in 1983,
and Grade 12 in 1984

NEW LOCATION:

WHY? Responding to needs expressed by:

- young people,
- parents,
- Church,
- Government.

Fully Accredited, Category I Approved Private School

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

HISTORICAL PREAMBLE

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph originated in France, in the city of Le Puy in 1648, through God's call in the ears of some young widows and girls who, moved by the suffering around them, desired to give themselves entirely to God and to the service of the neighbour.

"We are sent to bring the gift of unity wherever we may be ... to help restore the full communion of all persons in God and with God."

Our vocation requires us to work with others to build a world transformed from within by the values of the Gospel, where the dignity and freedom of every person is experienced and affirmed. In the exercise of this vocation, we have established and administered High Schools in Canada since 1854, in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia.

In February of 1979, the General Council of the Congregation, following on a Prayer and Government Workshop to critique our present High Schools, believed the signs of the times called us to step out in faith, and to augment the already significant contribution of our existing schools by establishing an alternative to them. A task force was set up to conduct a feasibility study as to the best possible location for this new school, the purpose of which is set out in the Statement of Philosophy of Kerygma High School. It is to the credit of the people of Edmonton that this city responded with such enthusiasm to that vision of education for shaping a new kind of future for our world that Kerygma was begun here.

Because not everyone is created in the same mold, sound pedagogy demands alternatives in education, alternatives for students, for parents, and for staff. For those who want an alternative, Kerygma invites to something radical: to working at learning how to become a faith-community that truly reverences the uniqueness of each person, that is willing to speak the truth in love; to support each other in the laying down of our lives in service; to live cooperatively in an interdependent world, infusing all of life with the justice that flows from reverence.

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto has provided all that is needed to give birth to this new venture - personnel, funding, support, - but the hope is that eventually, within five to ten years, the community will assume responsibility for its perpetuation.

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

KERYGMA

The name Kerygma was chosen for the School after reflection on the central Christian mystery of the Trinity. The word "Kerygma" contains within it the burden of responsibility to another. This name constantly reminds us, the teachers, that the dream is to build a school that cares about its students, that will be staffed with men and women who radiate warmth, interest, and enthusiasm for life, and who will show this by consistently challenging their students to develop their full potential as human persons.

PROFESSIONAL STANDING OF KERYGMA HIGH SCHOOL

Kerygma received approval from the Alberta Department of Education as a Category I Private School as of September 1, 1982. Its Staff members have full certification in Alberta. The Course of Studies is that outlined for the Province of Alberta, with adaptations and additions, permissible within the framework of the Department of Education Guidelines, which will give life to the alternative nature of the vision of Kerygma High School. We offer the core subjects of the Alberta Curriculum; English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education, plus a variety of options, with Religious Education integrated into the whole. Through this academic programme, we try to foster within our students a desire for learning, independent thinking, responsibility and accountability, and growth in the ability to set challenging goals for themselves. This is done by trying to match teaching styles to the learning styles of the students, and by means of varieties of assignments which require initiative on the part of the student.

PURPOSE

Kerygma is an alternative coeducational senior Catholic High School whose aim is to graduate young men and women of Gospel value conviction, reverence, cooperation, justice, love, service, responsibility, who are determined to shape their environment and to work with all people of good will to change the oppressive structures which bind the people of their world.

PRINCIPLES

1. There is only Christ; He is everything and He is in everything. (Colossians 3:11)

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

2. The family is the indispensable heart of society, necessary to transmit values, culture, heritage, and to give young people support, affirmation, vision. No school can arrogate to itself this God-given right of parents; the school simply works with the parents to facilitate this kind of growth.

   It is firmly established Catholic teaching that PARENTS have the first right and duty to educate their children. This includes the right to choose the kind of schooling they wish these children to receive.

   As part of its role ... the Catholic School should reach out to parents with suggestions and guidance to help them provide a Christian home atmosphere, a basically human atmosphere, indispensable to the formation of authentic human beings. (The Catholic School: Rome, 1977)

3. Each person has been uniquely and wonderfully created by God, and is, therefore, worthy of reverence, as is all of God's creation.

4. Justice for all, which flows from reverence, is a constitutive element of the Gospel. (Matt. 5; Luke 6:20-38; Matt. 25) True justice is always informed by love.

GOALS

1. To develop a Faith-Community where Jesus Christ and His truth shape and challenge parents, staff, and students to become a prophetic people:
   - signs of His love in an unloving world;
   - agents of peace in a hostile world;
   - those who will stand up for justice on behalf of oppressed peoples everywhere: and a living proof, as a Christian Community, that cooperation and caring are not only possible but are, indeed, a liberating condition of life lived fully.

2. To continuously stress reverence for the self as uniquely and wonderfully created by God, reverence for each other person as equally unique and wonderful, and reverence for all of creation, and in the developing of our giftedness, to build up the Kingdom of God. (Ephes. 2:10; 4:12; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 20-21; Rom. 8:19-23)

3. To strive to foster an attitude of mind and a conviction that loving service, as lived by Jesus, (John 13:1-17) is at the heart of all human living.

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

4. In the desire to work together to build, with Jesus, this Faith-Community of persons who actively live reverence, service, justice, cooperation, to pray that, in our human struggle, we may be graced to support each other, forgive each other, and learn how to celebrate together the uniqueness of each other.

OBJECTIVES

To develop the Faith Dimension in Community, and thus to build the whole life of the School, to strengthen the bonds that exist between parents and students.

1. a) The Faith-Community of Parents, Students, Staff, which is the foundation of our School, is brought about through His gift, and as an end result of our praying together, meeting together, working together, celebrating together.

   b) To this end, we have in the School a Chapel made meaningful by the presence of Jesus.

      Students are encouraged to use the Chapel often, as a place of quiet, of reflection, of prayer. Mass and other forms of worship are planned from time to time by Staff and Students.

      Staff often take small groups to Chapel.

   c) To facilitate development of friendship in the student body, the students are encouraged to use the in-school lunch periods to get to know each other and to recreate together, and to organize social and cultural events to be held both intra- and extracurricularly.

   d) To maintain the community dimension, we intend to limit the size of the school to approximately 200 students.

   e) Parents are continuously involved in the life and running of the School.

      During the year, Community Days are held in which the students, their families, and Staff and their families, participate. These days are planned by the Parents, and take the form of recreation and/or education for the whole group, Liturgy, and a pot-luck supper.

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Since Kerygma is an integral part of the Church of the Archdiocese, Parish Priests are invited to be the celebrants of these Family Day Liturgies, some of which are held in the actual parishes of the students. The ultimate aim is that, through this experience of shared Christian Community, all Parents, Students, and Staff will more readily and more capably offer their services to the local Church, to build up the Community that is at the heart of that Parish. In this context, we also work very closely, and joyfully, with our Archbishop.

f) In addition, Parents serve on a Parents' Council with Staff and Students, to further facilitate growth of the School.

9) A Weekly Prayer hour is held in the School Chapel for Parents who want to/can come to pray for the Students.

h) A Biblical Andragogy Group, of Parents of Kerygma, meets weekly in the School.

i) Evening Meetings for Parents/Staff are held as on-going formation for Parents, meetings dealing with topics proposed by parents, staff and students.

j) Prior to the opening of School each September, a 3 to 4 day camping trip is conducted for the boys and for the girls, along with Staff and some Parents, to help our students begin to build community.

k) Newsletters from the School to the Parents are sent out regularly.

1) Parents are encouraged to drop into the School at any time.

m) Plans will be made for an annual celebration of the founding of the School.

n) As a necessary adjunct to the School Community, and as a support without which we cannot function, an Advisory Board serves the purposes and goals of Kerygma.

A search was made in early 1982 for generous, dedicated Board Members. Twenty men and women, including two Parents of Kerygma Students, and two Students, comprise this body which meets to encourage, to challenge the thrust of the School, and to actively solicit financial support.

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

By-laws consistent with our Philosophy were approved March 1, 1983.

o) Evaluations of each of these practises is routinely carried out jointly by Staff, Parents and Students.

To educate for Gospel values, the basis of all our teaching is the counter-cultural values of Jesus.

II. a) Students are encouraged to use Gospel values as the criteria for questioning and challenging the values being promoted in our Society: consumerism, aggressiveness, competitiveness, - values which lead to gross inequity and injustice. This requires a commitment from all who are a part of this community to take seriously God's preferential option for the poor, to think globally and to act locally on issues which affect our world. Regular Staff Meetings promote staff development, and are the means by which staff challenge, inspire, and encourage each other to grow in a world vision.

b) Biology classes, Social Studies, Religious Education classes, and some education on Family Days provide students with opportunities to study local and global issues, and to reflect on them in light of Jesus' teachings.

c) Following on this reflection, students are encouraged to formulate individual and group responses to these issues, which will lead to some kind of positive action/s based on Gospel values.

d) Weekly, students participate in a volunteer programme which can facilitate growth in a sense of commitment, of service without monetary reward, and enables them to experience first-hand the plight of the under-privileged in our society.

e) Opportunity is given students to consider a departure from the traditional Gr. 12 Graduation ceremonies. They are challenged to consider a radical kind of education, a long range project which will help them to grow in the areas of adventure, creativity, and aesthetics, logical enquiry, practical skills, and service. This project may involve the student in a Third World living experience, or take him/her for a period of time to an economically deprived area of Canada.

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

f) The three weeks work experience, along with guided reflection and the written assignments to be done with their parents, help to ensure that students are constantly examining their own lives, and their response to life in the light of the contemporary scene.

Challenge to students to respond to life, to discover and develop their own giftedness, to become aware of their responsibility to develop all their God-given talents and to live a life of loving service to others.

III. a) Students meet daily, at 8:30, with a Staff advisor. During this time, they participate in guided reflection on their volunteer service programme, their work experience, the day-to-day issues in the school.

b) They are encouraged to take charge of Assemblies, to interact with all other students, to be creative in planning in-school and extra-curricular activities.

c) Staff continually hold students responsible for the consequences of their decisions, and encourage them to be faithful to any commitments they make.

d) Frequent readings and discussions are held on "giftedness," in order that students may reflect on and discover more about their own wonderful uniqueness.

e) Staff, growing in some of the same ways, will become more aware of their own giftedness, and are encouraged, as responsible members of the Staff Team, to place their gifts at the service of the Community that, together, we may all grow into Christ.

f) Each Staff member, in turn, assumes responsibility for weekly Staff Meetings and weekly Assemblies.

g) Staff regularly prays together, evaluates progress (academic, social, emotional, community development, etc.) of the school in terms of its philosophy, goals, and objectives, and strives to reach all decisions through consensus.

To imbue the programme with all the hope and joy of God's promise of peace that we, as Christians, learn to be His gift to all people.

APPENDIX I (Cont'd)

KERYGMA: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

IV. a) Music, art, and drama, because they recreate the spirit, are an integral part of the school; frequently, there is time for shared enjoyment in school dances, simple parties, intra-mural sports, etc., for staff and students.

b) Encouragement and affirmation of all genuine effort on the part of Staff and Students is promoted.

c) The keeping of our school neat, clean, and attractively decorated is an expression of our hope and joy in God's presence among us.

d) Whatever promotes harmony is given priority in our day-to-day life at Kerygma.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION:

1) A student, having been presented with our philosophy, must want to come, and should give evidence of wanting to adopt the values presented by Kerygma.

2) As a necessary minimum, he/she must obtain 50% in grade 9 subjects.

3) Parents must agree to be actively involved in the life of the school.

TUITION: $600.00

SUMMARY

A constitutive dimension of the life of the school is Justice based on reverence, reverence for self as created, loved, and gifted by God, reverence for the other as equally loved and gifted, and reverence for the universe we have been given to shape and direct, Kerygma students are given the opportunity to become responsible, to learn how to work together with all caring people in making even a small contribution towards shaping a world of justice, love, unity and peace.

Our continual challenge to our students, to ourselves, to all whom we encounter in this great work of education is the challenge of God to us, as expressed in Deuteronomy 30:20 "Choose life!" - the foreshadowing of Jesus' own words, "I have come that you may have Life, and have it to the full."